Gov't, MILF sign agreement to resume peace talks

Story Below, Col. I

Malaysians not gullible, says envoy

HINDI KAMI UTO-UTO!

By Norman Bordadora

MALAYSIANS are friendly but not gullible.

This, according to Malaysian Ambassador Nur Taufik Mohammad, explains

MALAYSIANS/ A13

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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WHAT'S INSIDE

- **7 new sectoral reps may now take seats, SC rules** NEWS/A2
- **ADB to cancel RP loans** BUSINESS/B1
- **Aussie apologizes over Dante Tan scam** NEWS /A3

GMA transition president

Joker raps Palace, House team-up on Cha-cha

By Juliet Labog-Javellana, Christine O. Avendaño and Cynthia D. Balana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday again acknowledged the need to amend the 1987 Constitution, but declared that her administration was "not engaged" in the matter for now.

But Sen. Joker Arroyo deplored what he said had been a team-up between the Palace and the House to push Charter change.

Arroyo told the INQUIRER that Malacañang had been "feigning indifference" to moves to amend the Constitution although it had "in fact marshaled since last year a

JOKER/ A14

Drilon: We still have the numbers

By Michael Lim Ubac

WITH the death of Sen. Rene Cayetano the ruling bloc in the Upper House is down to 12 which number is enough to maintain the status quo.

Senate President Franklin Drilon stressed yesterday that the ruling power still had the numbers.

He dismissed as purely "speculative" insinuations that Cayetano's death could lead to the untimely demise of the ruling bloc in the Senate.

But Drilon admitted that the Senate political landscape would change. But he referred only to a minor reorganization to reassign Cayetano's committees on educa-

DRILON/ A14

GRIEVING Cayetano children Pia, Rene Carl and Lino (partly hidden) gaze at the remains of their father lying in state at the lanai of the family residence at Ayala Alabang in Muntinlupa. The senator's funeral is scheduled on Sunday at the Garden of Memories Memorial Park in Pateros.

JESS YUSON

Why they kept senator's cancer secret

ON HIS first father-less morning yesterday, Lino Cayetano paid special "tribute" to his father, Sen. Rene Cayetano, by going on his usual morning jog with elder sister Pia around a few blocks near their Ayala-Alabang residence.

"You can say it was my longest jog ever, and it was dedicated to dad," he said, adding that the elder Cayetano, himself a sportsman in his youth, "taught us to make sports a part of our lifestyle."

The 5-km run, he said, also gave him and his sister some solitude suffused with memories of their father—who was now lying in a flag-draped coffin in their home.

"We shed some tears as we ran, that was almost like a movie," said Lino, who gave three-fifths of his liver to his father.

In an earlier interview with the INQUIRER, the three other Cayetano children said Lino's fully restored physical strength which now allows him to again compete in triathlons and other sports was convincing proof that a liver transplant can be perfectly safe also on the part of the donor.

"I'll never regret what I did even if I knew

WHY/ A14

President willing to give up half of her term

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Carlito Pablo

MALACAÑANG is packaging President Macapagal-Arroyo as a "transition president" in 2004.

"Only GMA has the nobility to act as transition president and see to the full shift to a parliamentary form of government midway in her new term" if she is elected next year, Norberto Gonzales, her adviser on special concerns and Malacañang's point man in pushing Charter change this year, said in a phone interview yesterday from Bangkok.

Gonzales said that compared to other supposed presidential hopefuls, only Ms Macapagal would be willing to cut short her term in 2007 to pave the way for the adoption of amendments in the 1987 Constitution.

As early as last Friday, Gonzales said "we need a transition president, and the President is the ideal."

"I think the President is willing to give up [half of her term]. Anyway, she started as a transition president," he said then.

He also said Ms Macapagal needed just three more years starting next year to "complete" a full six-year term. In 2001, then Vice President Macapagal took over the remaining three years of ousted President Joseph Estrada's term.

GMA TRANSITION/ A14

GMA: Stop bickering over who should lead war on drugs

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Jerome Aning

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo ordered authorities to stop bickering over who should lead the anti-drug campaign.

Ironically, the squabbling was prompted by the decision of the President to tap former Manila policemen to lead the anti-drug war despite the existence of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) which was supposed to be the lead agency in the campaign.

The President made this point even as she ordered not to spare the rich and famous, the high and mighty in the campaign against illegal drugs. She wants no sacred cows.

"I am demanding that authorities conduct a top to bottom campaign that not only targets the poor communities but also the rich and famous," the President said.

The drug menace cuts across all social classes, according to the President.

"Our campaign must be total and blind to wealth or social status. It shall not spare the high and mighty from the force of law," she said.

She said the problem of illegal drugs was too serious for the nation to be divided on the issue.

"The war against drugs must be waged in the streets and communities and not reflected in bickering within our institutions of governance," she said.

GMA/ A13

READY, aim, fire: Members of the MILF conducted a war exercise somewhere in Maguindanao last April.

REUTERS

WE NEED PEACE IN MINDANAO
WE NEED PEACE IN MINDANAO
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CEASEFIRE

RYAN LIM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

A WISH devoutly espoused by children in Maguindanao may come true as the government welcomed plans for a ceasefire by the MILF.

Gov't, MILF sign agreement to resume peace talks

DAVAO CITY—After a week of informal talks in Malaysia, the Philippine government and the 12,000-strong Moro Islamic Liberation Front have moved a step closer to resuming peace negotiations.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu yesterday said the two sides signed on Monday an agreement calling for the withdrawal of military troops from MILF-controlled areas, particularly the Buliok complex in Pikit, North Cotabato.

Kabalu said the document, which was first released after talks in March, included a government commitment to return seven rebel camps captured from the MILF in the past two years.

He said the agreement also called for the quashing of arrest warrants for top MILF leaders in connection with a series of bombings and raids, the entry of international teams to monitor a ceasefire, a pledge by Manila to channel money to MILF agencies to fund development activities in Mindanao.

In Manila, however, spokespersons of the government peace panel said they had received no word of any such agreement

GOV'T/ A13

9 out of 10 test centers below par

By Blanche S. Rivera and Martin P. Marfil

CAN results of drug tests in the country be trusted?

Maybe not as 90 percent of the country's 1,053 drug testing centers were found to have violated at least one of the Department of Health's requirements for screening.

The centers which conduct drug tests on millions of drivers, security guards, members of the Philippine National Police and workers seeking employment abroad, make it a multibillion-peso industry. At least 3 million drivers renew their licenses every year and each must shell out P350 for the drug test.

Benjamin Reyes, supervising health program officer of the National Center for Health Promotions, said the majority of the centers accredited by the Philippine National Police, the Land Trans-

9 OUT/ A13

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/06/26/03

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FRONTPAGE

7 new sectoral reps may now take seats

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE SUPREME Court yesterday paved the way for seven more Congress party-list representatives to assume their House seats as it partially lifted its May 2001 order stopping the proclamation of any party-list winners.

This means that the Commission on Elections may now proclaim the nominees of Buhay (Buhay Hayaang Yumabong), Amin (Anak Mindanao), Aba (Alyansang Bayanihan ng mga Magsasaka, Manggagawang Bukid at Mangingisda), Cocofed (Cocofed-Philippine Coconut Producers Federation), PM (Partido ng Manggagawa), Sanlakas and Abanse! Pinay.

Each group would be entitled to seat one nominee in the House of Representatives, the SC said.

Associate Justice Artemio Panganiban, who penned the en banc resolution, said the Philippine party-list system was "one-of-a-kind" such that the process of determining the winners in the last party-list elections was "neither simple nor easy."

"The novelty of the party-list system in our country necessarily demanded careful study and deliberation by the Court," he said.

8-point guidelines

"Principles and precedents in other democracies of the world have not been very helpful because our party-list law has earmarked unique parameters, giving rise to an equally distinctive Philippine-style party-list system," Panganiban said.

The court hoped that after all the lengthy and troubling proclamation process, "the marginalized and under-represented sectors of our country will be accorded ever-widening opportunities to participate in nation-building so they can help develop, in peace and harmony, a society that is just, humane, progressive, and free."

The seven party-list group candidates passed the eight-point guidelines issued by the court in its June 26, 2001 decision which directed the Comelec to "make a factual determination" as to which of the 162 party-list group candidates met the criteria set out in the guidelines.

The guidelines required that the political party, sector, organization or coalition must represent the marginalized and under-represented groups, among other requirements.

Of the 162 party-list groups allowed to participate in the 2001 party-list polls, the SC found that only 46 qualified under the eight-point guidelines.

Of the 46, only 12 obtained at least two percent of the total valid votes cast for the party-list system.

The SC excluded from the "total valid votes cast" the votes obtained by the disqualified candidates.

The Comelec wanted to disqualify Buhay and Cocofed because of Buhay's alleged links to the El Shaddai Catholic charismatic movement and Cocofed's to the government.

But the court was convinced by the Solicitor General's argument that the Comelec's findings on the two groups were "not supported by substantial evidence."

The seven groups will be joining the representatives of party-list groups Bayan Muna, Akbayan, Butil, Apec and Cibac who are now installed in Congress.

The SC has yet to decide the issue of whether additional seats should be allotted to Apec, Akbayan, Butil and Cibac.

Customers to pay Meralco's ₱20-B Napocor settlement

THE MANILA Electric Co. said it would be passing on to customers the P20 billion it has to pay the National Power Corp. under a settlement agreement, but claimed it would result in the reduction of electricity rates.

The P20 billion does not involve a one-time payment to the state-run Napocor but would be paid over a period of five years, said Ivanna de la Peña, Meralco's chief of utility economics.

She explained that the amount would be "recovered" from Meralco customers and that Meralco and Napocor would be filing jointly with the Energy Regulatory Commission a proposal for that purpose.

The P20 billion represents electricity supply from 2002 to 2004 that Meralco will not even be using but is obliged to purchase from Napocor under a 10-year power sale contract which is on its last three years.

Under the terms of the contract, Meralco is supposed to cover at least 3,600 megawatts of its monthly energy demand with power bought from Napocor.

Meralco has failed to meet the minimum purchases from Napocor since it entered into supply contracts with independent power producers that started operating in 2000.

This resulted in Napocor slapping the distribution utility with fines totaling P28 billion.

Meralco retaliated by charging Napocor some P8.5 billion in delayed transmission services.

Meralco and Napocor went through a third-party mediation process when talks to determine the continued validity of the power supply contract bogged down early this year.

De la Peña said the P20 billion represented the amount that Meralco would be paying Napocor under an agreement concluded in April.

"(This includes) sales to customers that were prematurely connected directly to Napocor's power lines," she said. *Ronnel W. Domingo*

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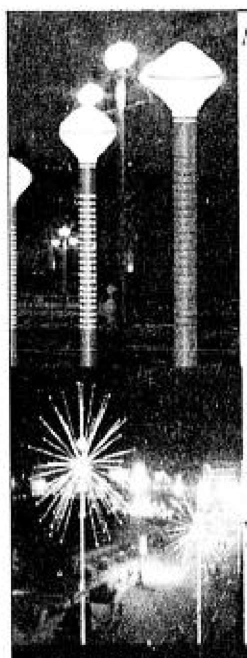

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'Misrepresentation' weakened case vs Erap, defense gloats

By Armand N. Nocum

LAWYERS of jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada yesterday said the prosecution evidence in the plunder case against their client was now in doubt after they claimed to have succeeded in showing that one of the state prosecutors no longer had any authority to appear before the court.

In the eye of the storm is former senior state prosecutor Alexander Padilla who appeared in court on March 24 to present a vital witness who linked Estrada to the infamous Jose Velarde account.

With Padilla now accused of misrepresenting himself, defense lawyer Prospero Crescini said the credibility of the prosecution's evidence, comprising of 76 witnesses and 700 documents, was now in question.

"It will show the lack of integrity and the prosecutorial misconduct of the prosecutor, but this affects also the evidence that they have presented. You know they are not beyond fabricating the evidence," Crescini told reporters at the Sandiganbayan.

The anti-graft court's special division handling the plunder trial against Estrada yesterday conducted a hearing on the defense motion asking the court to cite Padilla for contempt for allegedly appearing in court to present witness Aurora Valdoz, vice president of the Philippine Depositors Insurance Corp., after Padilla had already allegedly resigned his justice department post.

The hearing lasted for about five hours as opposing lawyers engaged in a heated debate.

Estrada's counsels also wanted the court to nullify the Baldoz testimony which they said was crucial for the prosecutors to secure a conviction.

Baldoz had testified that Estrada's son, San Juan Mayor Jose Victor "JV" Ejercito, had a P182 million account at the Urban Bank Trust, which he later allegedly transferred to the Velarde account at the Equitable PCI-Bank.

At the start of the hearing, defense lawyers said they were surprised when Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio offered to "retake" the Baldoz testimony.

Presiding Justice Minita Nazario warned the prosecution that this could be tantamount to the prosecution's "surrendering" and indirectly admitting that the testimony of Baldoz was "null and void."

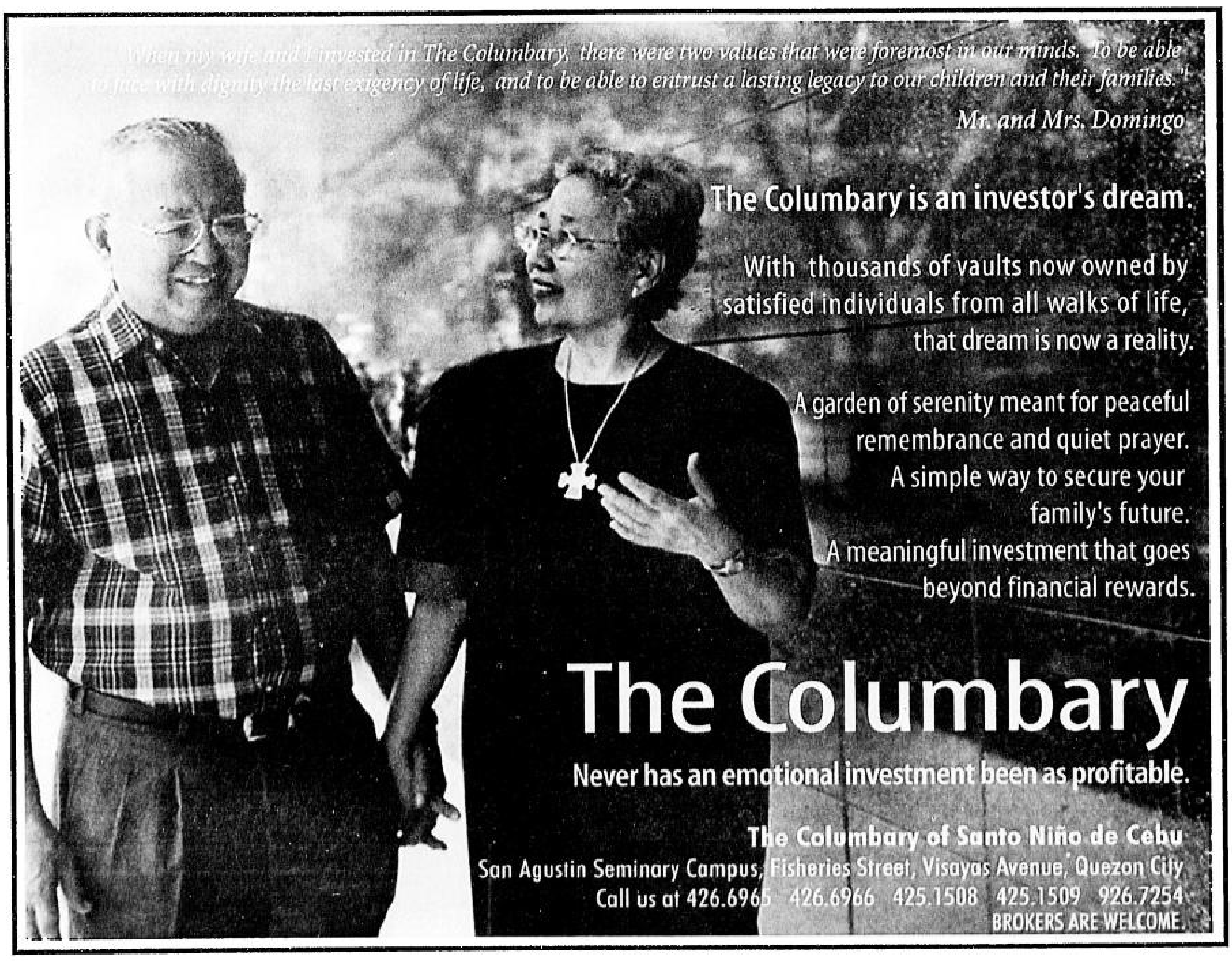
Retaking a testimony means that a witness is asked to return to the witness stand and tell the court what she previously testified to.

Villa-Ignacio said the offer to retake the testimony of Baldoz did not mean that the prosecution was admitting to the charges against Padilla. He said the move was only meant to speed up the proceedings.

But Crescini insisted that it was "an admission that the proceedings in March 24 were vitiated by the appearance of a counsel who is no longer qualified to prosecute this case."

Legal observers said that even if Padilla were to be found in the wrong, it would be a mere procedural error and does not really affect the value of Baldoz's testimony.

It did not also help that Padilla through his lawyer Edgar Asuncion relayed offer to "apologize" to each of the four defense lawyers so as to settle the matter quietly.



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BROKERS ARE WELCOME.

RP mission off to US to lobby for vets' benefits

By Cynthia D. Balana

A SEVEN-MAN joint legislative-executive lobby mission left Saturday for the United States to secure Washington's $2 million pledge for direct medical assistance to Filipino World War II veterans, it was learned yesterday.

The mission was headed by Rep. Tomas Dumpit (La Union), chair of the House committee on veterans affairs.

Other members of the team are Rep. James Gordon of Zambales, vice chair of the House committee on veterans affairs; Col. Emmanuel de Ocampo, president of the Veterans Federation of the Philippines (VFP); retired Gen. Ernesto Gidaya, president of the Association of Generals and Flag Officers; Esperanza de Ocampo of VFP; and Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) Deputy Administrator Romeo Lazo.

Informed sources said that the Dumpit group would sound out American leaders on their commitment to help fasttrack legislation for veterans based here, especially the $15 million-a-year Medical Care benefits for US-based Filipino veterans, and proposed amendments to the stalled Equity Bill.

It will press for an additional direct assistance to Philippine-based veterans in the form of medicines and other medical supplies and equipment.

These medical grants are over and above the $1 million ($500,000 for 2002 and another $500,000 for 2003) already given to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center by the US Department of Veterans Affairs.

NAIA 3 COMPENSATION

Fraport sees no fast relief

FRANKFURT—Frankfurt airport operator Fraport AG said on Wednesday it did not expect a swift compensation for a terminal project in Manila that turned soured and resulted in a big write-down.

Chief Executive Wilhelm Bender told an annual meeting, however, full-year earnings would be steady without the charge from the Manila project and that he was optimistic Fraport would pay a dividend for 2003.

The company scrapped its 2002 dividend payout after a $333.7 million write-down on the Manila investment, a project dogged by financial problems at its partners and flagging support from the government.

The Supreme Court had declared the agreement between Piatco, of which Fraport is the main investor, and the Philippine government.

Bender said Fraport remained in talks with the Philippines about the project, which has depressed the company's shares and caused analysts to question its strategy of managing and sometimes taking stakes in airports beyond its main German hub.

"Even today we are talking to the Philippine government about appropriate compensation," Bender told the company's second annual meeting since going public in 2001.

"Results will likely not be achieved quickly."

He reiterated that Fraport was striving for earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) of roughly 500 million euros this year, compared with 503 million euros in 2002, excluding the Manila charge.

"We are working hard to keep EBITDA and net results in 2003 at the same level as 2002, excluding the Manila write down," Bender said.

The aviation industry has been hit hard by the sluggish economy, war in Iraq and the SARS virus. Bender said the company's cost-cutting program would help offset those factors in this year's results. *Reuters*

Aussie senator apologizes over Dante Tan scandal

TAN

SYDNEY—Australian opposition Labor Sen. Nick Bolkus apologized Wednesday for embarrassing his party by failing to disclose a $10,000 (US$6,500) donation he took from a notorious corporate fugitive.

Bolkus blamed disorganization for his oversight.

He admitted on Monday that he was the MP a minister claimed had accepted and failed to disclose a donation that Labor accepted from Filipino fugitive Dante Tan, who is at the center of allegations that the government traded visas for political donations.

Workplace Relations Minister Tony Abbott said police may be called on to investigate claims Bolkus had laundered money and failed to fully disclose the donation just before the 2001 election.

The opposition had tried for a month to shame the government over allegations that Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock had intervened to grant Tan a visa after he made a $10,000 donation to campaign funds.

Abbott told parliament Bolkus had cashed a check from Tan and reported it to electoral authorities as a donation from himself.

Bolkus, a former immigration minister and now backbencher, said the matter simply fell through the gaps because of his workload and various responsibilities.

"I was relying on others to do the other part of the declarations and in this context it appears it didn't happen comprehensively," he told ABC radio.

"I do regret the embarrassment to the Labor Party, to the leadership, to myself," he said, adding it was caused by disorganization on his part rather than intent.

He also regretted that it reflected badly on the parliament and clouded issues involving political donations to the ruling Liberal Party in exchange for favorable visa outcomes.

"So there is a lot of regret on my part," he said. *AFP*

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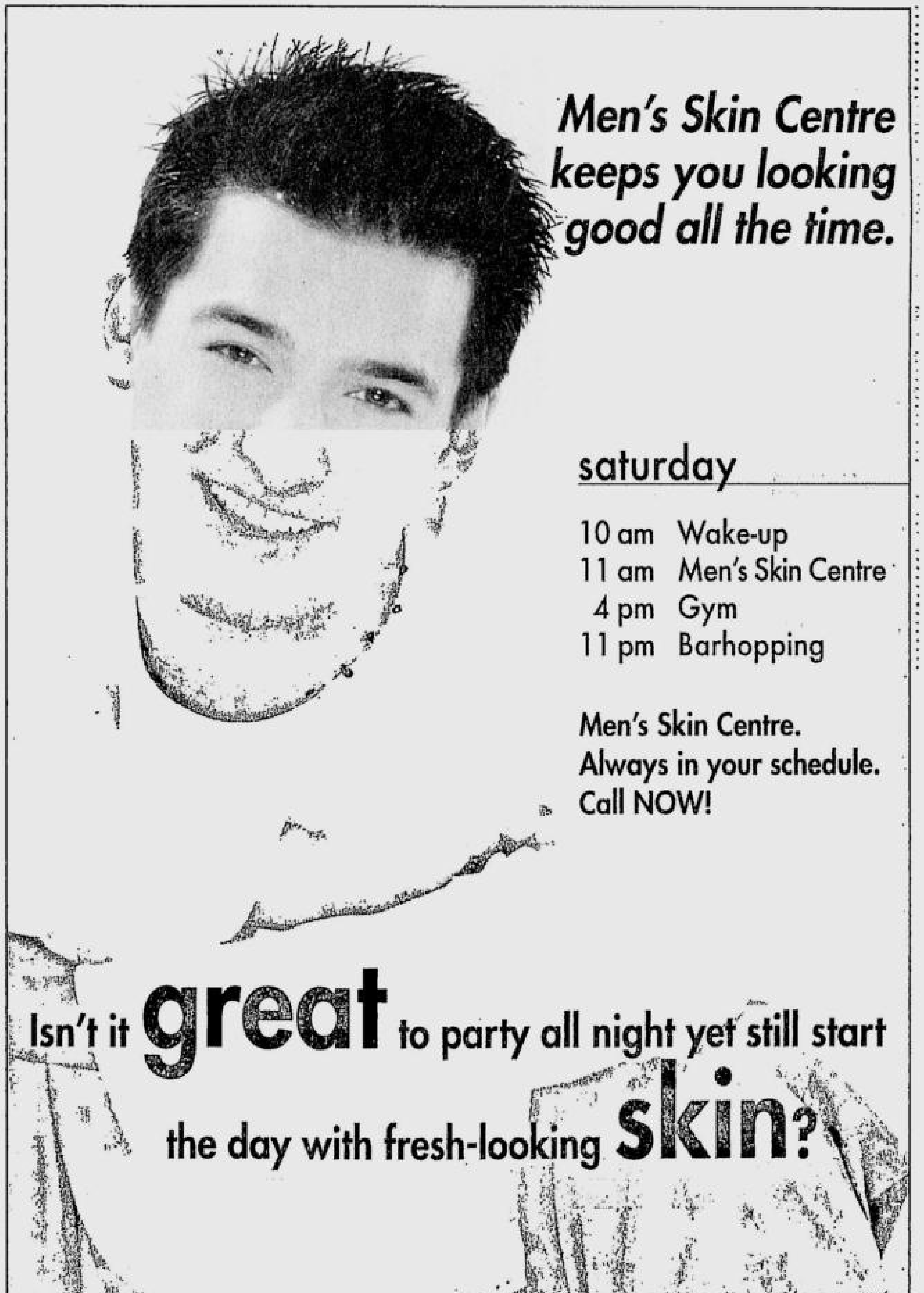
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2 FedEx pilots cited for Subic landing feat

WASHINGTON—Two US pilots have been given awards for landing an "unflyable" MD-11 with jammed hydraulic systems and a detached left wing flap at the Philippines' Subic Bay airport.

The FedEx Express pilots—Captain James Almlie and First Officer Mark Abbott—were presented with the Lieutenant General Harold L. George Civilian Airmanship Award at a weekend convention in Dayton, Ohio.

The award was given "for demonstrating superior airmanship and teamwork in safely recovering and landing an essentially unflyable MD-11 that had experienced severe flight control malfunctions during final approach into Subic Bay International Airport, Philippines on June 16, 2002," the Air Line Pilots Association said in a statement.

The crew was preparing to land FedEx Flight 5080 after an uneventful flight from Bangkok when they heard a loud bang and the aircraft rolled to the left, the association said in a statement.

"During the flight to Manila, the pilots had to take turns applying an estimated 90 to 110 kg of force on the control wheel required to keep the aircraft level," it said.

The Order of Daedalians—an organization for active and retired military pilots—presented the award June 21. *AFP*

GMA names 5 Nat'l Artists

FIVE individuals were yesterday elevated to the country's distinguished roster of National Artists in ceremonies in Malacañang yesterday.

President Macapagal-Arroyo conferred the National Artist Award on Virgilio Almario (literature), Salvador Bernal (theater and design), the late Jose Joya (visual arts), Eddie Romero (film and broadcast arts) and Alejandro Roces (literature).

They joined 45 other artists so honored since the awards, the highest distinction accorded to individuals who have made significant contributions to the development of Philippine arts, was conceived in 1972. The first National Artist Award was given posthumously that year to painter Fernando Amorsolo.

Almario, the poet, literary historian and critic, was cited for "exemplif(ying) the artist whose refinement of voice and reach of vision in his use of the national language has ennobled his writing beyond mere perfection of craft to making Filipino a shining vessel for creative, literary and intellectual discourse equal to any language."

Writing under the name Rio Alma, Almario has written 12 books of poetry in 34 years, including "Makinasyon," "Perigrinasyon," the trilogy "Doktrinang Anakpawis, Mga Retrato at Rekwerdo" and "Muli, Sa Kandungan ng Lupa."

Brilliant body of works

Bernal, the acknowledged dean of contemporary Filipino theater design, has put up more than 300 productions since 1969 that were distinguished for their originality.

He was cited for producing "a brilliant body of works which has visualized and enriched Filipino original works in theater, dance and music to an eminent degree and raised Philippine theater design to the highest levels of professionalism."

The award came too late for painter and multimedia artist Jose Joya who died in 1995.

A sister of Joya said getting a National Artist Award had been a life-long dream of her brother.

Joya's art was hailed as an important landmark in the development of modern art.

"His legacy is a large body of works of consistent excellence which has won the admiration of artists both in the local and international art scene," the citation read.

Joya was credited for creating an authentic Filipino abstract idiom that transcended foreign influences. His paintings were of harmonious colors inspired by Philippine landscapes such as green paddies and golden fields of harvest.

Roces was cited as the country's best writer of comic short stories.

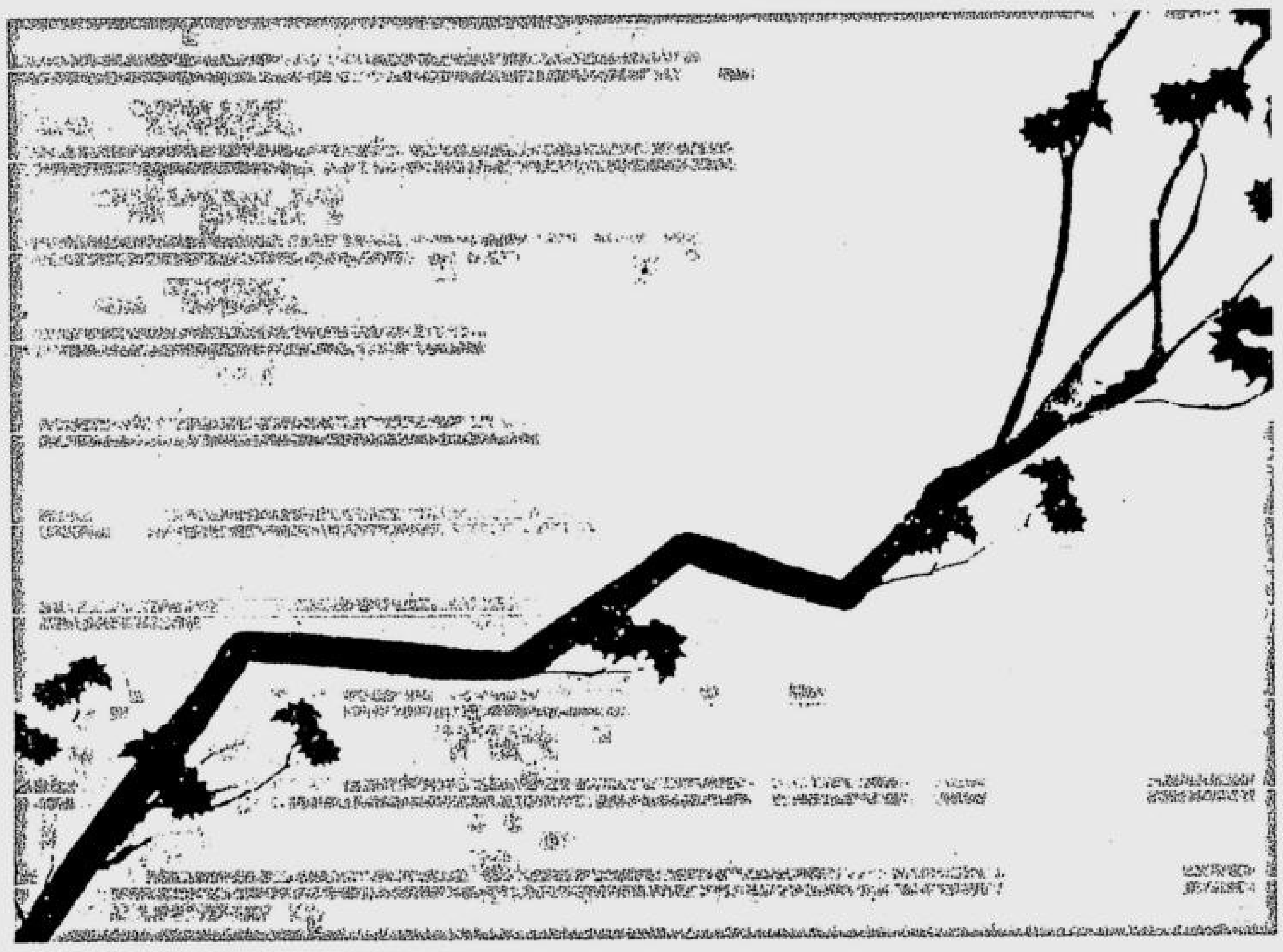
"From the widely anthologized 'My Brother's Peculiar Chicken' to the more extended narratives in his books of short stories, Roces has found a novel way to approach the Filipino character," the citation said.

Romero, the screenwriter, film director and producer, was cited as the "quintessential Filipino filmmaker whose life is devoted to the art and commerce of cinema."

"His early works during the postwar studio system and his adventure into American productions in the late 1950s through the early 1970s did not deter him from making more ambitious films that contributed toward the renewal of Philippine cinema in the second half of the 1970s," the citation read.

Juliet Labog-Javellana

Kalikasan at Kalusugan.



Isang paanyaya!
We are celebrating Corporate Social Responsibility Week with a three-day CSR EXPO 2003 at the Philippine International Convention Center, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City on July 9 – 11, 2003.

Ka Partner Ka!
sa Kapayapaan at Kaunlaran

Pinoy ka, imbitado ka! All exhibit areas and on-site activities, e.g. Wellness Check-ups, Smoke Emission Testing, etc. are open to the public as well as all the Plenaries, Forums and Roundtable Discussions, and Aerobics. Lunch has limited seating, so attendance is by invitation. For inquiries, call 892-9189, 892-9084.

Kalikasan at Kalusugan. The country's natural wealth has drastically dwindled, its biodiversity is seriously endangered. As a result of environmental abuse and degradation, the people's health and wellness have suffered. We can still renew and replenish the abundance of our homeland. If we all accept that we are merely stewards of these gifts, and custodians of our children's wellbeing.

July 10, Thursday

8:00 - 10:00 **PLENARY: PARTNERING IN ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES**
- ABS-CBN Bantay Kalikasan: Save the La Mesa Watershed
- Ayala Foundation: Solid Waste Management
- First Philippine Conservation International
- FPHC-PBSP: Palparan Integrated Community Development Program
- Mirant Philippines: Carbon Sink Initiative

10:15 - 12:00 **PLENARY: BRIDGING LEADERSHIP**
Speaker: Prof. Ernesto Garilao, AIM

12:00 - 1:30 **LUNCHEON and PLENARY**
Theme : Partners for the Environment
Speakers: Hon. Elisea G. Gozun, Secretary, DENR
Nicasio I. Alcantara, Chair & CEO, Petron Corp.
Hon. Leonardo B. Roman, Governor, Province of Bataan
Dr. Chua Thia-Eng, Regional Program Manager, UNDP-IMO

2:00 - 3:30 **HERITAGE CONSERVATION and PROGRESS: KA-PARTNER BA?**

2:30 - 3:30 **LEADERS FOR HEALTH**

3:45 - 5:00 **OVERVIEW OF PHILIPPINE BIODIVERSITY**

3:45 - 5:15 **VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT**

2:00 - 3:30 **ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS**
- Gawad Kalinga
- Integrated Microelectronics, IMI
- Inquirer and Linis-Ganda: Waste Segregation and Recycling
- Petron's Volunteerism In Action (VIA)
- Saving a World Wonder: The Ifugao Rice Terraces
- Tribong MFI

3:30 - 5:00 **ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS**
- Community Development through Health Intervention
- Disaster Management
- Kilusan Ligtas Malaria
- Stay Healthy: Don't Start…Smoking!
- Women's Health

5:30 **AEROBICS**

On-site Activities
- Photo Exhibits/Program Exhibits/Resource Center: Open Daily
- Fun, Friendship And Learning At The Knowledge Camp: Daily 8:00-11:00A.M; 1:00-4:00 P.M.
- Wellness Booth: Free Blood Pressure Taking, Blood Typing, Cholesterol Testing, Ecg, Osteoporosis Screening, Fitness Sessions; Foot Spa, Massage: Daily From 9:00A.M. To 4:00 P.M.
- Bloodletting
- Smoke Emission Testing

Due to increased participation, venue has been transferred to PICC.

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5 Inquirer stories nominated for Ongpin journalism awards

FIVE INQUIRER stories are nominated for this year's Jaime V. Ongpin Awards for Excellence in Journalism.

Margarita Debuque's "PEACe bonds stir political, financial storm" published on Feb. 19-22, 2002 is competing with nine other nominees for the Explanatory Report category.

INQUIRER stories nominated for the Investigative Report category are "Abadilla 5: Story straight out of martial law pages" by Stella Ruth Gonzales, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Nancy Calauor-Carvajal published on Dec. 10-14, 2002; "Mail fraud artists back in business" by Jerry Esplanada, published on Jan. 7-9, 2002; "Multitel's Ponzi scam: New face of greed" by Elena R. Torrijos, published on Nov. 11-14, 2002; and "Pagcor to flood RP with slot machines" by John Nery and TJ Burgonio with the PDI Team, published on Aug. 10-12, 2002.

Other articles

Other 2002 articles nominated for the Explanatory Report category are Karen Tiongson's "The complex business of picking justices: Who gets to sit on the bench" (Today, Aug. 23); Inday Espina-Varona, Johnna Villaviray and William Depasupil's "Capture of MILF camps has downside for gov't" (Manila Times, June 19-21);

Miriam Grace Go's "Economics of annulment, only for the rich?" and Jet Damazo's "Winning a second chance" Special Report (Newsbreak, Feb. 13); Malou Mangahas' "The Estrada plunder case, Year 1—Trial of the Century may take ages to finish" (Philippine Center for Invesitgative Journalism);

Marites Sison's "Garbage problem rooted in money and politics" (PCIJ); Zelda Soriano's "In hot water," Marites Vitug's "Moment of reckoning," Miriam Grace Go's "Ways of Raising funds" and Aries Rufo's "Profiting from charity work" Special Report (Newsbreak, May 27); Dulce Arguelles and Darwin Amojelar's "Medical malpractice, is there such a thing in the Philippines" (Sunday Times, Sept. 1);

Marites Vitug's "The moribund military" (Newsbreak, Aug. 19); and Eileen Mencias' "Raise my SSS contributions but please protect my money" (Manila Standard, Mar. 7-9).

Nominated for the Investigative Report category are Luz Rimban's "A dangerous place to be a journalist" (PCIJ); Carlos Conde and Daisy Gonzales' "Diwalwal folk caught in the grip of violence, greed" (Bulatlat.com);

Ricky Carandang's "Messing with workers' money," Aries Rufo's "Why secede?" and "The well-connected 'Bibong,'" and Lala Rimando's "Doing well in Dubai" Special Report (Newsbreak, June 24);

Maricel Cruz, Jena Balaoro, Ma. Ester Espina and Inday Espina-Varona's "Night falls and the flesh trade opens in Manila's tourist strip" (Manila Times, Oct. 2-5); "PEACe bonds put into question credibility of RP financial system" (BusinessWorld, Feb. 19-21); and Luz Rimban and Sheila Samonte-Pesayco's "Trail of power mess leads to Ramos" (PCIJ).

Over half a million cash prizes will be awarded to this year's winners. The announcement of winners is scheduled on June 26, 9:30 a.m. at the SGV Hall, 3rd floor, AIM Conference Center Manila, Benavidez St. corner Trasierra St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

3 per category

Three winners will be selected per category. First prize winners will get P70,000, a plaque and a travel grant; second prize winners will get P40,000; and third prize winners will get P20,000 each.

The first prize winner in the Investigative Report category will get the McLuhan Prize, a travel study tour of Canada, courtesy of the Canadian Embassy.

This year, the Australian Embassy will also be giving the Australian Ambassador's Award to the first prize winner in the Explanatory Report category.

The annual Ongpin Awards is organized by the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility, in cooperation with the Ateneo de Manila University. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, June 26, 2003
12th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Gen 16:1-12, 15-16
Gospel: Mt 7:21-29

Jesus said to his disciples, "Not everyone who says to me: Lord! Lord! will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my heavenly Father. Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not speak in your name? Did we not cast out devils and perform many miracles in your name?" Then I will tell them openly: I have never known you; away from me, you evil people!

"So, then, anyone who hears these words of mine and acts accordingly is like a wise man, who built his house on rock. The rain poured, the rivers flooded, and the wind blew and struck that house, but it did not collapse because it was built on rock. But anyone who hears these words of mine and does not act accordingly, is like a fool who built his house on sand. The rain poured, the rivers flooded, and the wind blew and struck that house; it collapsed, and what a terrible fall that was!"

When Jesus had finished this discourse, the crowds were struck by the way he taught, because he taught with authority unlike their teachers of the Law.

Commentary

Jesus, the one who has the words of everlasting life (Jn 6:68), teaches us that this our world of perspiring men and women, at times impatient and angry, but also capable of heroic love and self-sacrifice, is the altar on which worship is rendered to God. He leads us in such worship by leading us to an inward center, a rock that will withstand raging storms and devastating floods: faith in God as our Father. Faith is manifested not in stunning feats but in the struggle to make present the love of God in a cruel world. Jesus himself was a victim malicious talk, the plotting of self-seeking, jealous men, and the flawed administration of justice. He saved us not by a miracle, but by trusting in the Father's love through the pain of it all.

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Threatened with defrocking, priest clams up on celibacy

By Blanche S. Rivera

FROM celibacy to clean air.

Controversial priest Msgr. Nico Bautista yesterday vowed to shift his advocacy from optional celibacy to anti-pollution after being threatened with defrocking due to his vocal stance for priests to be allowed to marry.

Bautista said that he would have to "move on" to other issues such as people empowerment, anti-smoking and responsible media reporting.

"I have already said a mouthful about celibacy. I will still talk but about other issues," Bautista said in a phone interview yesterday.

He laughed only when asked if it was because of the reprimand he got from Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin for revealing details of a meeting at the Villa San Miguel in the wake of allegations of sexual misconduct against Bishop Teodoro Bacani Jr.

He said, however, that he would write the Cardinal to inquire about his violations for which he was threatened to suspended.

Bautista insisted that he was not rejecting the teachings of the Catholic Church with his open support for optional celibacy.

"I love the Church," he said, adding that he was confident that despite the warnings, he would not be suspended or defrocked.

"Even Bishop (Crisostomo) Yalung who fathered two children was not defrocked," he said. Yalung allegedly sired two children with his girlfriend Christine Rances.

In a June 19 letter, the archdiocese of Manila ordered Bautista "to cease and desist from making public pronouncements against Church universal order and discipline . . . more specifically on the matter of the law on priestly celibacy."

Bishop asks flock to pray for priests

DAGUPAN CITY—"We are used to asking the (priests) to pray for us. In these trying times for them and for the Church as a whole, I am asking you to pray for them."

This was the request of Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz to parishioners in the light of the sexual scandals involving priests and bishops.

"Do kindly pray for your priests in the archdiocese and for the bishops in the world. Do pray that the Father will protect them in a special way. Do pray that the son will abide by them closely. Do pray that the Holy Spirit will guide and strengthen them always," Cruz, in a circular letter read during masses on Sunday, said.

Cruz, the former president of the influential Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, said he is hopeful that with "strong faith, living hope and fervent love, the (erring priests and bishops) will emerge better persons and committed priests or bishops."

He admitted that in his diocese, six of the 12 priests who had been dismissed since 1996 were involved in sexual indiscretions.

Cruz, however, declined to name these erring priests or the details on their offenses.

"I am 'notorious' for not condoning sexual misconduct. My priests and other bishops know that I never allow (sexual misconduct). If they commit it, they're out," Cruz said.

He said the accusations against the erring priests were proven and these underwent due process.

"My advantage is that I am the presiding judge of the CBCP's national tribunal of appeal and I know the Canon Law," he said.

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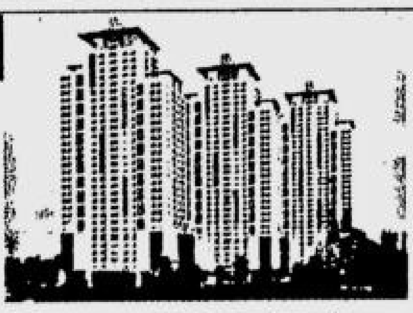

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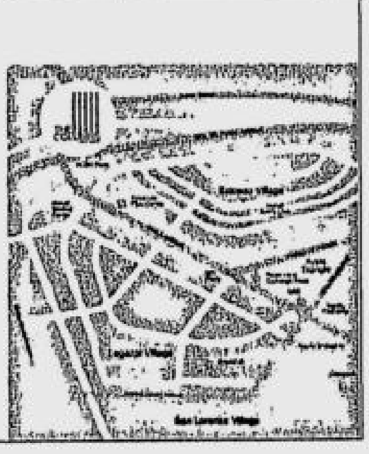

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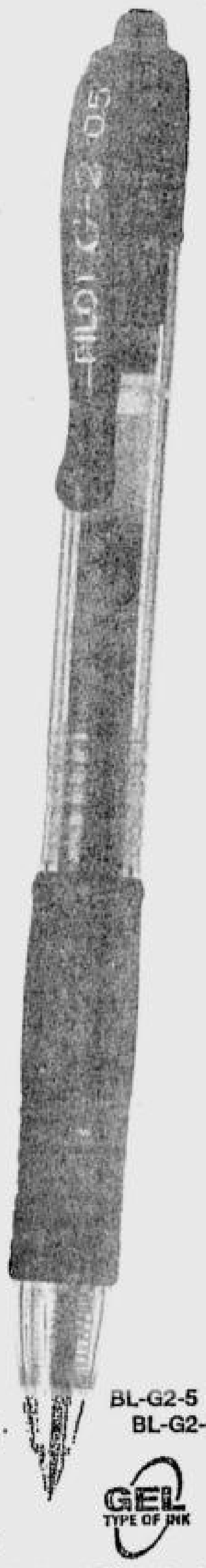

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EDITORIALS

Smoke-free, at last

THE SIGNING into law of the Tobacco Regulation Act is a whiff of fresh air in a legislative regime that is polluted with empty rhetoric, horse-trading and paralysis. Perhaps the most significant legislation in health and environment in the new century, Republic Act 9211 eclipses similar legislation in the past that had promised much but delivered little, such as the Generics Drug and the Clean Air Acts. The new law bans smoking in public places, tobacco advertising and the sale of tobacco products to those below 18 years old.

The wonder is that it took Congress a decade to pass a law whose relevance and need have been apparent to all, including smokers themselves. Smoking has long proved to be a dangerous addiction, with health-impairing costs to both smokers and non-smokers. Many people have died of smoking-related diseases such as cancer and heart ailment. Studies showed that smoking last year cost the Philippines P42 billion in medical expenses for tobacco-related diseases and loss of productivity.

On almost all counts, smoking is a menace worse than AIDS and SARS. It has only produced casualties, nicotine addicts, ill-mannered people who don't care a hoot if others imbibe their smoke, and tax evaders.

But on second thought, it is not surprising the new law took such a long time to pass. After all, the radical measure would have an impact on the country's 500,000 tobacco farmers. Centuries of tobacco farming (remember the Tobacco Monopoly of the Spanish era?) have endowed the trade with both romance and profitability. But the harsh health realities can't hide the fact that tobacco use has a debilitating effect on smokers and passive smokers. The new law seeks to shield the wider population from its effects while easing the burdens on farmers and manufacturers.

Now as then, characteristic of revolutionary legislation, the problem is implementation. But since the law went through the legislative mill in the face of staunch opposition from lawmakers representing the tobacco country of Northern Luzon and from manufacturers, much thought had gone into its conception and finalization. The law is not so drastic as to sink the tobacco industry and allied industries in one fell swoop, and it is not so compromised as to be a mockery.

Hastily passed laws that were rammed into the throats of opposers and doubters in the past have proved to be problematic and costly. The continued high costs of medication fly in the face of the silly rhetoric of the generics law, while unrealistic targets and projections have made the implementation of the Clean Air Act a joke.

Because of the support of Northern Luzon lawmakers and tobacco manufacturers, and the vigilance of anti-smoking advocates, the Tobacco Regulation Act promises to be a law that will not be tied down to its boastful commitments. This is one law whose smoke will not get in your eyes.

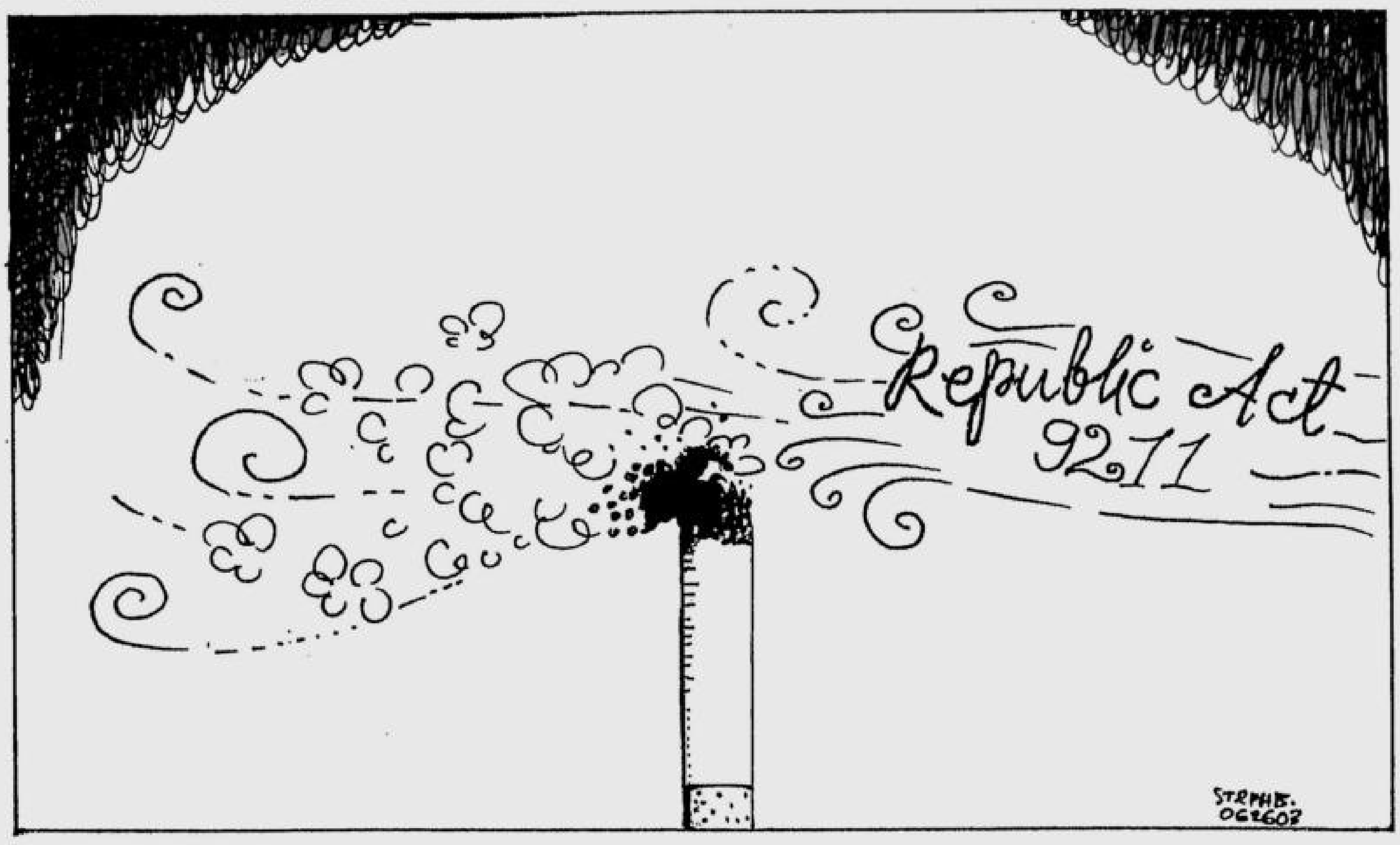
'Harry Profiteer'

THE SIGHT of adolescents and teenagers making long queues in bookstores to buy their first copies of "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix," the fifth installment in the famous series, should gratify the hearts of parents, reading experts, educators and just about anyone concerned about what the late Marshall Macluhan presciently called "the new illiteracy."

Truly, the Harry Potter series, about a boy who has the gift of magic, has sparked a new tide of reading among youngsters who, on ordinary days, would rather be glued to television watching the bad behavior of crass MTV and MTB stars or drooling over the saccharine sweetness of F4 and "Meteor Garden" on ABS-CBN and MYX. It signals a return to the pleasures of reading for reading's sake, outside of the pale of class assignments and book reports. It restores the love of reading.

But the full restoration threatens to be undermined by the practice of book dealers of jacking up the prices of much-awaited volumes like the Harry Potter series. The last time we checked, a hardbound copy of the newest novel was selling upwards of P1,400 with signals rife that the price may shoot up further.

To be sure, not only the aural-visual dynamism of the new media detracts the young from reading. The blame can also be put squarely on the high prices of books. Surely there is a way for book dealers to turn a profit, even a handsome profit, without taking the fun out of reading. After all, all persons, regardless of whether they can afford books or not, are entitled to the magic of reading.



Another whistle-blower exposes scam

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

LIKE the infamous and grossly overpriced President Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard, it took an insider to blow the whistle on the, again, overpricing of Line 2 of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) form Pasig to Recto-Avenida Rizal in Manila.

The whistle-blower this time is no less than the second highest official of the Metro Manila Light Rail Transit Consultants (MMLRTC), a consortium of foreign and Filipino consultancy firms engaged by the LRTA to provide construction supervision for the LRT 2 project. He is Roberto Amargo Gualberto, deputy project manager of MMLRTC, who held a press conference last Wednesday to expose this newest scam.

Gualberto said that two contracts worth P216 million for LRT 2 were overpriced. The LRTA also bought a rail grinding machine worth P175 million which is totally unnecessary as the rails it is supposed to grind are still very new—in fact, three-fourths are still unused. The LRTA won't need the machine in the next five years. Moreover, the LRTA already has a newly refurbished grinding machine.

Gualberto also revealed that the bidding was rigged to make favored bidders win. The LRTA had earlier been exposed by Rep. Augusto Baculio of overpricing the Pasig-to-Cubao line by P276 million allegedly to speed up construction by 69 days to have it finished by June 1 as a birthday gift to President Macapagal-Arroyo whose natal day falls on June 5. It was LRT administrator Teodoro Cruz whose birthday falls on June 1.

What Gualberto revealed follows the usual pattern of scams in the government, past and present. The public bidding was devised by legislators to make sure that the government always gets the lowest possible cost in any project, and to make sure that the awards or contracts are transparent.

But the smart operators found loopholes in the law that would allow the increase of the price from the original bid price. One of them is the so-called "escalation clause" which allows the contractor to ask for an increase for a variety of reasons—higher cost of materials, labor, currency exchange fluctuations, change order, etc. And because some of the increases will go to them anyway, government officials of course approve the increases.

That is how, in spite of the public bidding law, prices of government projects increase many times more than its original contract price. By the time the notorious Macapagal Boulevard was finished, its price had already quadrupled, giving it a place in the Guinness Book of World Records as the most expensive road, per linear meter, in the world. No recent government project has ever been finished at the original bid price. The trick is for the contractor to bid low to bag the contract and then repeatedly ask for increase as the work progresses.

Another trick is to make favored bidders win. And the way to do that is to rig the bidding procedure. Bidders who are not in on the conspiracy are disqualified. To give the appearance of competition, several favored contractors submit bids. But the winner is already determined, and the others will submit high bids to make the favored bidder win. The others will take their turn winning in the future bids.

In the case of the LRTA, Gualberto revealed that the bidding for the supply of equipment and software for the Management Information System (MIS) worth P43 million was rigged.

The three bidders which were allowed to participate in the MIS bidding, he said, were inter-related companies with offices in only one address: the 34th floor of RCBC Plaza, Tower 2, in Makati. These were Reach/Delta Bridge which submitted a bid of $1,387,280; Meco Industries with a bid of $1,461,293.92; and Easynet Services Inc., $1,889,370.

Easy Net Services is actually a subsidiary of DeltaBridge, Gualberto said, since the latter acquired 50 percent of the former in 2002. Meco Industries, on the other hand, was represented by Catherine F. David, who is also the director for web development of DeltaBridge.

Gualberto said the bids were overpriced by about $613,074 based on an independent canvass that he made to determine the fair market value of the equipment and services that were bidded out.

To skirt the budget limit of P40 million, the excess of P3,030,743 was processed as a variation order, Gualberto said. Administrator Cruz, project manager Enrico Garcia and assistant project manager Elmer Surbano approved this, which clearly benefited the company chosen beforehand.

Gualberto said he protested this action and refused to sign a document dated Sept. 16, 2002 to approve the deal. Sudir Kamal, MMLRTC project control manager, asked him to sign the paper, Gualberto said, but he refused.

Gualberto said an independent canvass made by IBM Philippines bore out his suspicion that there was overpricing. He reported this to Masahiro Takano, MMLRTC project manager, who ignored him, and repeated his findings to Cruz telling him, "Boss, *sabit tayo rito*, it's overpriced."

Cruz replied, "*Babantayan ko ito*," but never fulfilled his promise. He gave his approval to the document, to Gualberto's consternation.

Gualberto also charged Cruz, Garcia, Surbano, Takano and Makahato Awakihara, project manager of Sumitomo Corp., of rigging the bidding for the purchase of a high-capacity reprofiling and grinding vehicular machine by allowing the acceptance of only two bidders instead of the three required by procurement regulations.

Where there's smoke

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

I READ the story some years ago. An Italian cardinal visited the United States and in the course of his visit was given a tour of New York City. The last time he had been to New York was 10 years before, so his hosts were curious to know if he had noticed any changes in the city since. They asked him that at the end of the tour.

Well, he said, nothing much seemed to have changed. Except, he added, sadly, that the prostitutes seemed to have become more prosperous and plentiful. In fact, they seemed to have been sufficiently emboldened to invade the more ritzy places of the Big Apple.

His hosts were astonished by this observation and asked him why he thought so. The cardinal replied that he had noticed women dressed in fairly respectable clothes with less garish makeup and lipstick congregating around the doorways of buildings, cigarettes tucked in their mouths or fingers.

His hosts hastened to explain, with no small amount of amusement, that those women (and men) were not prostitutes. They were just smokers. New York had adopted some pretty strict policies on smoking, including a ban of smoking in offices. That was why the smokers were hanging around in the doorways of buildings, furiously dragging on their sticks. They had become the new pariahs.

I saw the same sight when I was there in 1995 after a hiatus of many years, except that I did not take the crowd to be prostitutes. I thought they were milling around a street performer. Those performers used to abound in the 1980s, though I recall that most of them came out at night. Alas, that was one of the things they took out from the streets along with smokers from offices—the fantastic musicians that used to play in street corners and subway stations for loose change.

When I came back to the United States a couple of years ago, the anti-smoking campaign had gotten even tougher. In San Francisco and Los Angeles, I saw, in lieu of billboards advertising Marlboro and Philip Morris, billboards warning people about the dangers of smoking. They came one after another—there was no way not to notice them while driving on the streets. Some of the notices were shrill, telling pregnant mothers they were frying their unborn babies' brains by smoking.

I am glad we ourselves have put some teeth into the anti-smoking campaign. I have no problem with people who smoke so long as they do it responsibly. So long, that is, as they make it a point to ruin only their health and not that of others. What pisses me off is people smoking in crowded places with kids around. That's foul, in more ways than one.

Happily, most smokers I know do not mind that this country gets tough on smoking. They themselves do not want their kids to pick up the habit, even if they are powerless to stop it. Indeed, even as they know they do not lead by example there.

I know the feeling. I was a smoker once, too, and can vouch for what the Marlboro Man said before he died of lung cancer: smoking is not a habit, it is an addiction. It is no more and no less an addiction than heroin and cocaine use.

I used to smoke three packs a day (more when I was writing). What can I say? I am not one to do things in moderation. The only reason I quit was that my asthma came back and I was being assailed by one lung disease after another. It was only the threat of not being there for a kid that was growing up that pushed me out of the rut.

Two things I'd just like to suggest in enforcing the anti-smoking law.

The first is that we do not go overboard in our zeal to stamp out the ill effects of smoking. That is to say, we ought to respect the rights of smokers, too. Smokers are not criminals. They have a right to indulge themselves, while fully realizing the dangers they face. They may not be treated like social outcasts. What they do with or to themselves is their business. I would argue the same thing about people who smoke marijuana, or jute, or however it is now called these days. There is no lack of medical evidence showing tobacco is the infinitely more dangerous weed. But that is another story.

The only caveat there is that they ought to respect other people's rights, too. Their right to exhale poison into the air ends where another person's right to inhale oxygen begins. So long as they smoke only where their lungs and nobody else's stand to reap cancer, it's live and let live. Or live and let die, as the Bond movie says.

The second is that the campaign should be forward-looking. There is precious little you can do about a generation steeped in the culture of smoking. A culture spread in particular by the movies. I do not know if the *bidas* in our action movies still smoke (they used to in our day, with the notable exception of Fernando Poe). John Wayne did, and he died of lung cancer from smoking. Well, he was a bad actor anyway. I understand that in China it's infinitely worse. The role models—Mao, Deng, Chou En Lai, et al.—all smoked, and smoked furiously. Though surprisingly, most of them lived to a ripe old age. They don't make 'em like they used to.

But there is much you can do about the next generation. I am glad in particular about the part banning the advertising of cigarettes. I'd been plugging for that all these years. What I can't understand is why the ban has to take five years to take effect. That is more than one college course, enough to claim a new generation of victims. A year should be more than enough breathing space for advertisers (pun most assuredly intended). Their right to thrive ends where the youth's right to live begins.

Yes, I'm all for what's being done here. What can I say? Where there's smoke, there's emphysema.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@info.com.ph

Let's have that report

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

I WAS a bit startled to read in yesterday's INQUIRER front-page story former UP president and now Kalayaan College president Jose Abueva as opining that "the administration's bid to amend the Constitution is another attempt to extend President Macapagal-Arroyo's term." I knew that Abueva is part of the study group on Charter change formed by Presidential Adviser Norberto Gonzales, composed of leading academics, and he has been quite open about his preference for a constitutional convention as against a constituent assembly, and federalism. But I could not believe that Abueva would regard the Charter change effort as "another attempt to merely extend GMA's term." For one thing, he surely knows that at this time pushing term extension would be political suicide.

* * *

So I called up Abueva and he vehemently denied having said that Charter change was a ploy to "merely extend" GMA's term. In fact he sent me this statement: "The President is entitled to run for a full term under the present Constitution, and for any high office if it can be revised in time for next year's election. Our nationwide citizens' movement for a federal Philippines is proposing reforms to establish a Federal Republic with a parliamentary government through a Constitutional Convention. In this we have honest differences with Speaker De Venecia, Representative Nachura and the study group under Secretary Gonzales regarding the kind of parliamentary system that should be established, the shift to a federal system and its timing, and the mode of changing the Constitution. Our Movement is grateful to all of them for their openness to our idea and for involving us in the ongoing debate."

* * *

Senators Robert Barbers and Panfilo Lacson have locked horns over the 99-page report of the Senate committees on public order and on defense, and the blue ribbon committee on Lacson's alleged involvement in drug activities. The report, the product of nine lengthy, much-publicized hearings late in 2001 up to early 2002, is said to recommend the formal investigation by the Department of Justice of Lacson and former key officials in drug activities. It was finished about February or March of last year, and majority of the committee members have signed it, but up to now it has not been calendared for presentation on the Senate floor, despite public pressure for lead committee chair Barbers to present it.

Over the many months various media people, including our colleague Justice Isagani Cruz, have asked why no report has been released yet. As the Senate session closed earlier this month, Sen. Joker Arroyo, in answer to media's pestering again, was quoted as saying that "the mystery of it all is that it has been over a year and yet the report has not been calendared." To which Sen. John Osmeña retorted, "Joker is correct. The majority leader (Sen. Loren Legarda) must explain."

* * *

On June 3, 2002, Osmeña triggered a crisis in the Senate when he moved to declare all Senate positions vacant just when the Lacson report was about to be presented. The opposition staged a rump session, and the one who plotted the swift countermeasures for Senate Chief Franklin Drilon was the late Sen. Rene Cayetano. Later I recall that Barbers was about to take up the report again but was told that fairness dictated that he wait for Lacson to show up. That was one of the few times the latter wasn't around (he and Sen. Luisa Ejercito are among the senators with near-perfect attendance records). Another excuse was the need for "re-routing" the report first.

Current talk is that Legarda has not acted on it in order to protect Lacson, who has invited her to be his runningmate. I am sure she will deny that she is protecting Lacson, but in fairness to various personalities being pilloried because of the report's no-show (including herself), she should explain why the report has not been calendared. The public deserves to know its contents as it affects the reputation of a declared presidential candidate.

* * *

Today is the 28th death anniversary of St. Josemaria Escriva, founder of Opus Dei. Since his canonization in Rome last Oct. 6, the Church has set down June 26 as his feast day. So this is the first time that the feast will be observed in churches around the world. St. Josemaria is considered the saint of the working people and professionals because of his teaching that work is, for the Christian, a means of sanctification if it's done well and offered to God. The customary yearly Mass marking the saint's 28th death anniversary will still be held at various churches: tonight at 6 p.m. at the Manila Cathedral; on Saturday, June 28 at 8 a.m. at Christ the King Church in Green Meadows, Quezon City, and on July 10 at 5:30 p.m. at the Holy Rosary Parish in Angeles City, to be officiated by Pampanga Archbishop Paciano Aniceto.

* * *

There have been a lot of discussions in the media about recent "inappropriate" behavior of the clergy, and today's feast is a good occasion to recall St. Josemaria Escriva's prudence in this regard. At the height of the Spanish Civil War, when the fascist forces had gotten control of Madrid and priests' lives were in grave danger, then Father Escriva, like many priests, took to hiding. A concerned friend of his arranged that he hide in the house of an Argentine diplomat where he would be safe. But when Escriva learned that the only other person staying there was a young female servant girl, he refused and preferred to risk danger by hiding all over the city again. Escriva worried not only about possible temptations to his priestly vow of chastity but also about the scandal the situation of a priest being with a female all by himself in a house could cause. So delicate was his prudence.

Only scents remain in Guangdong

FEATURE

Lauren Gelfand

GUANGZHOU, China—The smell of fear lingers in the cavernous halls of the South China Wild Animal Market in Guangzhou, the capital of the southern Chinese province of Guangdong where SARS is thought to have originated last November.

Gone are the packs of raccoon dogs and clutters of rodent-like civet cats crammed into wire cages and the nests of snakes coiled into boxes for sale to discerning eaters. They were among the thousands of animals destroyed in a government crackdown on rearing, selling and eating wild animals after scientists announced viruses carried by the wildlife were nearly identical to the corona virus responsible for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

Brushing aside culinary practices that date back centuries, the provincial government banned the eating of wild animals, in an effort to nurture "civilized and hygienic eating habits," the Beijing Times wrote on May 27, the day after the law was passed.

Anxious to mute the global criticism spawned by China's early reluctance to acknowledge and treat the pneumonia-like respiratory virus as it crept from Guangdong into the rest of China—Beijing especially—and around the world to infect more than 8,000 people, government action against the markets and the traders was swift, brutal and complete. Within days of deploying operation "green sword," law enforcement officials in Guangdong confiscated 30,335 animals, searched 991 markets and 6,617 hotels and restaurants, according to state media. More than 10,000 wild animals were seized at Baiyun Airport in Guangzhou in two days.

Traders like a man who gave his surname only as Li, the latest in a line of family members stretching back two decades who have operated a narrow stall in the South China market, were left only to clean the cages.

Government action against the markets and the traders was swift, brutal and complete

Selling wild life had become a highly lucrative practice, driven by rising incomes in the province, the hotbed of industrial production for China.

Daily earnings at the Xinyuan, South China and two other major markets in Guangzhou exceeded one million yuan ($120,000), according to state media.

"I used to make a lot of money here, selling wholesale to restaurants, hotels, people who knew where to come when they wanted to impress others," said South China tenant Li, estimating his average monthly take at 15,000 yuan ($1,812). "They have dropped the rent on my place from 5,000 to 1,000 a month but how can I can pay that if I am not earning any money?"

"None of us got SARS," grinned another trader named Feng. "We are all fine. Except for not having any money or anything to do."

There has been no mention of what, if any, are plans to compensate the traders or whether they will be encouraged to raise ducks and geese, or even dogs, cats, rabbits and guinea pigs—all of which are crammed into cages at the front of the South China market.

Even so, "with no more wild animals here, people go to other places for their birds," said a young woman who refused to be identified.

Fines and jail terms have been whispered as potential consequences for defying the ban, but traders in the South China market were not eager to be the first to try.

"Maybe if you gave me 100,000 yuan and an airplane, I would go up to the center of China and pick up some wild animals," said a man called Zhao, his cigarette dangling from his lip.

Still, restaurants in both Guangzhou and Guangdong's second city Shenzhen continue to feature the traditional "Dragon, Lion, Phoenix" specialty—which substitutes snake for the dragon, pheasant for the phoenix, and the civet cat for the lion—on their menus.

According to Linda Saif, a professor at Ohio State University and world authority on coronavirus, a viral family that includes the agent for SARS as well as the common cold, Guangdong's government will have to face down centuries of tradition to enforce the ban on eating wild animals. "It will be very difficult for the government to control a 5,000-year-old tradition or a practice that is thousands of years old," Saif told a recent meeting in Paris where she met experts of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), a Paris-based agency that lays out standards for animal hygiene in world trade. "There's the potential that it would just be driven underground."

Underground opportunities or not, Li is considering whether to find another line of work. "I don't really know how to do anything else, though, so perhaps I will just sit here and wait," he said. *AFP*

Hope in microfinance

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

ON A CLEAR day, go out into the streets of Metro Manila and you're likely going to see Indians navigating the streets and alleys. I often see a man and a woman, usually without protective helmets, weaving in and out of crowded places on their motorbikes.

Who has not heard of the "five-six" lending scheme of the "Bombay," which charges 20 percent interest for 20, 30 or 40 days. I am told that 40 days is the regular duration of the loan. This translates into 182.5 percent per annum.

If you borrow P500, you are expected to pay P600 after 40 days. Theoretically, if you are not able to pay anything for a year, you should be paying P1,412.50 at the end of the year. But under the 40-day scheme, if you compound the interest every 40 days that you are not able to pay, at year's end you owe the usurer P2,579.88. This means a whopping 416 percent interest on your P500 loan.

Sometimes the interest for a 40-day loan is already deducted. So if you're borrowing P500, you get only P400. The Bombay will collect the P500 you owe, not at the end of the 40 days but starting Day 2 until Day 40 or beyond. The lender does not compute for diminishing interest even as you pay every day. Now this is getting intricate.

By the way, in school I was numerically challenged, meaning math did not like me. But much, much later I did realize I could solve math problems in my own peculiar way, by using my own customized formula. While a math whiz would take the straight highway, the likes of me would take the path less trodden and search for answers in craggy hills and verdant valleys. It's like searching for the pearl of great price. Writers' brains, I discovered, attack numerical problems quite differently. Now educators speak of seven or so "intelligences." But I digress.

In other words, I would not be the best person to run a "five-six" empire.

Poor Filipinos desperately in need of cash for their small businesses bite the bullet and go for the "five-six." Without knowing it, they are being robbed of their profit.

Microfinance is the hope of small entrepreneurs.

Sadly, many who have no access to honest, non-usurious microfinance have to turn to usurers. (I don't want to use the word loan sharks because this insults sharks which are magnificent creatures.)

The Asian Development Bank defines microfinance as "the provision of a broad range of financial services such as deposits, loans, payment services, money transfer and insurance for the poor and the low-income households and their microenterprises."

Believers in microfinance as a means to help the hardworking poor believe in the core principles that: the poor need access to credit and financial services; and that the poor are valuable clients with the capacity to repay their loans and even save.

Recently Citigroup, the Microfinance Council of the Philippines and the Central Bank worked together to give a human face to microfinance. This took the form of a search for a successful microentrepreneur, that is, a small borrower who used the money for a small business and dramatically raised the family income and even created jobs.

Chosen Microentrepreneur of the Year was Josephine Alima. With her husband and four kids, she began making home-made peanut cookies in 2000, starting with one bag of flour a day. Today, they use up seven bags to produce 625 packs of cookies. And they now have 24 employees in their bakery.

To be considered for the award, one must have "100 percent repayment rate and measurable results in terms of employment generation, sales, growth in profits and reinvestment of profits." Josephine took home a P100,000-prize from Citibank.

At the lunch meeting with media hosted by Citibank and their partners, Josephine's case was proudly mentioned. I took home handouts that extolled her feat. One of the publications had her on the entire cover. Alas, none of them mentioned how much she borrowed, where she borrowed, the details of how she turned her project into a success, what kind of entrepreneur she was, etc. I wanted to read that. While going over the stuff at home, I wanted to scream, where is her story?! Here was a story crying out to be written and read.

In two Citibank publications, it was stressed that in searching for nominees, "Citibank employees swapped their laptops for notebooks to interview microentrepreneurs across the country." So many expensive laptops you have, I now know, but where's Josephine's story? Pardon my irritation.

Instead I got 14 pages of "The Competitive Advantage of Corporate Philanthropy" which is about "the most cost-effective way for a company to improve its competitive context."

Citigroup proudly informs that since 1980, when it made its first microfinance development grant of $5,000 to Accion International, it has continued to honor its commitment to help break the poverty cycle by helping people build small, sustainable businesses. In the last four years, Citigroup Foundation has awarded more than $11 million in grants to 145 microfinance partners in 50 countries.

It was good to again meet Dr. Cecilia del Castillo, executive director of Negros Women for Tomorrow Foundation. She is a moving force in Philnet, a network of microfinance groups, and an expert in microfinance. She can be reached at pdnwtf@ihc.com.ph.

* * *

Ask and you shall receive. In last week's column ("Just what did he do?") I asked questions regarding the Bishop Bacani sexual harassment case. I did receive a number of e-mailed feedback from readers saying they were asking the same questions. Someone reliable called and I received a straightforward answer.

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

Wanted: President

YOUNG BLOOD

Anthony Ian M. Cruz

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

THIS early, prospective presidential candidates of traditiona political parties are coming out and telling us they're running. But many people are dismayed by the qualifications (o lack thereof) of most, if not all, of them. It seems that *trapo* parties are hard put to find candidates with clean records and good platforms of governance.

Applicant No. 1 is President Macapagal-Arroyo, who remains the de facto presidential bet of Lakas.

She claimed to champion new politics in the 2001 elections, as she campaigned for the People Power Coalition.

Whatever was "new" in her brand of politics, we don't know. Because aside from being utterly loyal to the United States, she has rehashed the all-out war policy of Marcos Aquino and Estrada, allowed the free influx of foreign farm goods to the detriment of local producers, and refused to raise wages or abolish the Purchased Power Adjustment. Her friends in a certain law office are said to corner the juiciest contracts.

Ms Macapagal squeals in delight at being known as Uncle Sam's rah-rah girl. She has been appropriately rewarded with a grand welcome to Washington by President George W. Bush.

New Politics *pala ha*?

Applicant No. 2 is Eduardo M. Cojuangco, an unrepentant Marcos crony who has not been successfully prosecuted by all post-Marcos regimes because he has become very powerful and influential.

Nobody dares touch this big landlord with a reputation for acting like Pacman who now owns three-fourths of the whole of Negros and is said to be driving hundreds of peasant families out of a cassava plantation in Isabela. He is so happy with the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) because it enlarged his landholdings and made it easier to fool his tenants.

In business, it is said that Cojuangco uses his coconut which is his secret of success. But let no one forget that he seized control of San Miguel Corp. and other companies not with the use of his own money but with the money of thousands of coconut farmers. Up to now, he has yet to return to them billions of pesos in coco levy funds.

It's up to us whether to send Cojuangco to jail or to Malacañang.

Applicant No. 3 is Panfilo Lacson, whose pretty-boy looks are living proof of the adage, "Don't judge a book by its cover."

During martial law, Lacson was a member of the dreaded Military Intelligence and Security Group which specialized in various forms of torture. Together with his chief, Rodolfo Aguinaldo, Lacson was said to have enjoyed his assignments which the members of Selda cannot remember now without reliving their anguish.

As anti-crime czar, he was said to have silenced suspects such as those in the controversial Kuratong Baleleng rubout case. As supercop, Lacson looked the other way while President Estrada expanded his *jueteng* kingdom. Does it not bother anyone that it took People Power II to stop all these shenanigans?

Lacson is also widely perceived to be intolerant of criticism, a trait that may be a carry-over from his long experience as a torturer during martial law. Proof: his erstwhile friend-turned-critic landed in jail when he was PNP chief.

Lacson was also the PNP chief when the Abu Sayyaf grew from a small bandit gang to an internationally-known terrorist group.

Applicant No. 4 is Raul Roco, who is known for always wearing floral polo shirts. Roco has been leading survey after survey of presidential aspirants. He in turn has confirmed repeatedly his intention to run under his paper party, Aksyon Demokratiko, and hopefully under Lakas.

He looks and smells clean. But looks can be deceiving. Roco has not explained very well his record as a partner in the powerful Accra law firm which provided legal cover for the Marcos dictatorship's looting operations, including what the tyrant and his cronies did to the coco levy.

Roco has also been mum about his platform and program of government. In classic *trapo* style, Roco has not made public his views on various issues, perhaps thinking that not speaking or not acting on such issues would make him look better than the others. He should have enough respect for the Filipino people, especially the youth, by sharing with them what he plans to do if he is elected to the presidency.

Applicant No. 5 is Fernando Poe Jr., former President Joseph Estrada's bet and the king of Philippine movies. He has no experience in public administration or governance. Enough said.

Applicant No. 6 is Angelo Reyes, who is best known as the chief of staff of the Armed Forces who defected to People Power II only after realizing the people would be able to topple Estrada from power in just a matter of hours. He is hated by Muslims and peasants for launching all-out wars under two presidents, Estrada and Macapagal-Arroyo. He was the AFP chief when the Abu Sayyaf roamed free and kidnapped Filipinos and foreigners alike.

Reyes has been shuttling frequently to Washington, D.C., especially the Pentagon where he has repeatedly represented the government in talks about the Mutual Logistics and Support Agreement (a new agreement that gives endless "temporary" access to US ships, vessels and troops) and more Balikatan war games in areas of conflict like Sulu.

This warmonger is unrepentant even if his tough talk and his all-out wars have caused so much civilian blood to be shed and pushed back efforts to address the root causes of rebellion whether of the communists or of Moros.

There are other hopefuls like Noli "Kabayan" de Castro, Juan "Let's DOH it" Flavier and Loren Legarda, who are moving heaven and earth to make themselves look like serious contenders. Like Roco, they have not given us even a hint of their platform. *Ang kakapal.*

Just a quick look at all of them makes us feel hopeless. They're all *trapos*, who have much to protect and much to give the people in terms of more hardship, more problems and more disgrace.

Before the campaign season begins, I would really like to put up an ad that says: Wanted a.s.a.p. for President of the Philippines, male or female, at least 45 years old, a patriot, respects people, has clear ideas about how to run the country, can stand up to foreign bullies, does not make promises, has no business interest to protect, will finally redistribute land to farmers and implement industrialization. *Trapos*, US puppets, torturers, cronies and similar life forms need not apply. Open to workers, farmers and others who have not been given a chance. His motto should be: *Bayan Muna bago ang sarili, Bayan muna higit sa lahat*. Reward: The people's respect and a lofty place in history.

Anthony Ian M. Cruz, 27, writes for Bagong Alyansang Makabayan.

Senate has become the problem

I THANK you for devoting an entire editorial (PDI, 6/23/03) to my statement on the Philippine Senate. Jerry Esplanada did an excellent job in reporting my brief chat with him. I said the Senate is a dead institution, and I was not happy to say it. I expected some senators to quote Mark Twain and say that reports of its death are slightly exaggerated. But the INQUIRER was quicker to react than my former colleagues.

Senate President Franklin Drilon has since rejoined, saying the Senate has accomplished much under his leadership. His list includes the passage of several important bills, including those on absentee voting and dual citizenship. The two bills are in response to popular demand, but both are constitutionally flawed.

The Senate is a deliberative assembly, not a fiscal's office or a police precinct. It has a legislative function, an informing function, a teaching function, an expressive function. Whatever else it does, it must debate ideas, which either end up as law or form part of the intellectual property of the public.

The Senate must live by certain rules. This is possible only if its members live by those rules. When senators are free to leave the sessions in order to crown a beauty queen or speak to a group elsewhere, or when they believe a senator can also be a paid newscaster, or a stand-up model for a detergent, drug or drink, then there is a problem in the Senate. And when no senator can say or do anything about it, then the Senate has become the problem itself.

I am happy your editorial flashed back to Joseph Estrada's impeachment trial. That must be revisited, but we must be completely honest about it.

On Jan. 16, 2001, 11 senators, myself included, voted against the opening of that infamous second envelope. That envelope, according to then prosecutor, now senator, Joker Arroyo, would prove that President Estrada kept P3.3 billion in his Equitable Bank account. We did not believe that claim, and we did not believe it was, even if true, material or relevant to the charges. Joker and company walked out. The anti-Estrada crowd took to the rests. Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took over with the help of the military commanders and Supreme Court justices.

On Feb. 14, 2003, then Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. initiated the opening—just for the record. The envelope yielded not a single piece of evidence linking Estrada to the bank documents, and none of Joker's fabulous P3.3 billion!

Strangely enough, the INQUIRER, which had devoted so much space to this story, completely ignored the report on the contents of the controversial envelope.

One may also note that the INQUIRER, as the leading newspaper of record, never bothered to point out that at least eight of the senator-judges had already called for Estrada's resignation even before the trial began and could never have rendered "impartial justice" to the respondent.

I happen to believe that unless there was a real closure to the 2001 coup, which destroyed our Constitution and the rule of law, it would be folly to hold presidential elections in 2004. We cannot possibly elect a new president, only to have a small powerful group, invoking precedent, drive him out of office without due process. This cuts to the bone of my political belief. My views on the Senate must be read in this context.

—FRANCISCO S. TATAD,
Citizens' Caucus,
R-1004 Richmonde Towers,
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Anti-smoking law is not enforceable

SMOKING AREA

EXPECTED to come next is a cigarette ban, after a tough anti-drug law. Smoke and be fined from P500 to P4,000 or jailed from 30 days to 3 years, depending on the gravity of the offense. How's that? If I am caught having smoked only half a stick of cigarette, will I just pay half the fine or serve only half the term?

RA 9211 as birthday gift to the proponent, Sen. Juan Flavier from the President, is a common circus trick. After all, the primary advocate of the "Doctor to the Barrios" program cannot be taken seriously. Remember how he floated his presidential bid in the strangest way?

This No Smoking Law is a farce. Why pass a law against smoking when it is well known that 40 percent of Filipinos are smokers?

The PNP has its hands full now, or at least for the next three months as it runs after drug traffickers. How will it also catch about 30 million smokers? Where will the PNP jail those caught? The whole thing sounds like a big fund-raising drive if 30 million will pay the fine ranging from P500 to P4,000.

In a class at the UP Department of Philosophy, it was once suggested that a tiny, in-house bureau should examine from a multi-disciplinary approach, the implications of a policy before implementation. This is an idea that has not made any headway. Only America has its Rand Corporation.

The new law claims to impose a total ban on smoking in public places. Can this work here where the implementation is determined by social status? Just what does "public places" mean?

It is clear this law cannot be enforced—not with only 120,000 police against 40 percent of the entire Philippine population blowing smoke rings in their faces.

As long as tobacco is still produced in Ilocos and cigarette companies continue a business-as-usual operation, a no-smoking law is just a piece of paper that can go up in smoke. Perhaps, tobacco companies in the business must pack up and leave.

No one, is under any compulsion to smoke or not to smoke. It is not the right of the state to impose what is just or what is not just about something most people around the world do. An evolving criminal superstructure, I am afraid, will, over the long term crumble from its own weight. This funny law can't do the trick.

—PRIMER C. PAGUNURAN,
L23 B28 Santana Village,
Antipolo City

Exploitation of students by teachers

PEOPLE say the teachers are our second parents when we are in school. We listen to them, believe them and learn many things from them. They are our educators, helping us to learn and to become good individuals, people who are nurtured with love, understanding, intelligence and self-esteem. What we cannot learn from our parents, we learn from teachers. Thus, teachers play crucial roles in making students become good and productive citizens in the future.

However, it is a sad fact that there are teachers who are involved in leftist organizations. This is so disappointing. Some of them actively participate in many protest actions against the government and are even supporters of armed groups.

We all know that these armed groups are one of the main reasons we cannot achieve the peace that the government is earnestly working for.

How can we become good leaders of the future if our mentors are influenced by armed groups? No wonder many students become activists and become members of these armed terrorist groups. Oftentimes, their own leaders may be the ones exploiting them.

For me, this is no longer about idealism or democracy or becoming a radical. This is plain exploitation of students.

—JOSEPH T. CABADING,
College of Arts and Sciences,
Ateneo de Zamboanga,
La Purisima Street,
Zamboanga City

Marinduque rehabilitation to come after study

THIS refers to the letter "Long overdue rehab for Marinduque" written by Rina Angela Corpus of the Legal Rights Center-Kasama sa Kalikasan (LRC-KsK), last June 13, 2003.

We would like to emphasize that the delays in the rehabilitation of the areas impacted by the Marcopper incident was a result of a complex series of events that ultimately led to the agreement that the provincial government of Marinduque will choose the independent third party group that will study and recommend the best option to rehabilitate the affected areas.

Upon the request of local officials last year, President Macapagal-Arroyo committed P20 million from the Presidential Social Fund to finance the third party study to be conducted by US scientists in order to eliminate any perception of bias that plagued previous efforts to find the best option.

This is not a "short-sighted" decision as alleged by the LRC-KsK because the presidential assistance will not absolve Placer Dome Inc. and Marcopper Mining Corp. of their responsibility of funding the rehabilitation option that will be recommended by the US scientists as well as in compensating residents affected by the incident.

Secondly, it is unfair to link the Marcopper issue to the ongoing dialogue on the proposed National Minerals Policy (NMP) wherein civil society members are also well represented.

Let me stress that nowhere in the 69-page NMP can it be found that the government "promotes large scale destruction of the environment or of communities."

There is also no basis for Corpus' statement that through the NMP, "more communities are bound to suffer a fate similar to that of the people of Marinduque." Clearly, the opinion expressed by her was a complete and direct misreading of the true intents and purpose of the NMP.

The proposed NMP is a document that "builds up from lessons of the past to revolutionize the present and lay down the future for the Philippine Minerals Industry." The draft policy will integrate sustainable development principles in decision-making involving mining projects through a participatory, multi-stakeholder process.

The position of LRC-KsK on the NMP is not surprising since it has been a staunch critic of the President and Environment Secretary Elisea G. Gozun's support to the Philippine minerals industry and has openly declared its "continuous advocacy against large-scale mining companies in the country."

While we respect LRC-KsK's position, we never realized that in embracing sustainable development, we would be branded as "short-sighted."

—HORACIO C. RAMOS,
director,
Mines and Geosciences Bureau,
mgbcentral@mines-denr.ph

Meralco refund plan unacceptable

THE 10-YEAR refund program announced by Meralco to comply with the Supreme Court order is definitely unacceptable to most consumers and contemptuous of the Court.

The refund can be fairly and expeditiously done if the Meralco management would put all options on the table and consult the consumers instead of devising ways of retaining control of the company and refunding what's due without interest.

As Meralco president Jesus Francisco has admitted, the P30 billion to be refunded was invested in utility assets and has therefore been added to stockholders' equity illegally by virtue of the Court's decision.

The 10-year refund program adds insult to injury. That's like asking consumers to wait 10 years to be paid for the overcharge.

A simple and fair solution is to recapitalize Meralco by adding the P30 billion to stockholders' equity and issue shares for it. Then, consumers should be given two options to receive the refund, as follows:

First, accept the refund in Meralco shares, which would probably be attractive to big consumers who can wait before selling them at a profit. Or, second, for those wanting a cash refund, they can be asked to wait until the shares corresponding to the amount due are sold.

Either way, Meralco's cash position will not be affected because the refund will come from newly issued shares of stock, which might attract institutional investors here and abroad because of the opportunity it gives them to elect their directors.

Of course, the current Meralco directors have the chance to be retained depending on their track record in managing the company.

—ROMMEL B. OCADO,
65 Ilocos Norte, Bago Bantay,
Quezon City

Rein in the VAT law

IT was good news that "GMA wants gross receipts tax on banks restored." (PDI, 6/21/03) I hope the President has come to realize that there should be an end to the tax bureau's relentless campaign to put up all commercial transactions under the VAT.

The fact is that the study group commissioned by the government prior to the passage of the original VAT Law in 1988 had indeed excluded not only banks and related financial institutions, but also several other services, i.e., professionals, hotels, restaurants and caterers, and the transportation industry, from the VAT net. The exclusion was, and still is, very rational. Even as the VAT system exists and has been accepted nearly worldwide, except in the United States, it suffers from the monumental irony that business establishments subjected to it are rarely expected to complain. That is because, unlike other taxes that form part of normal business costs, that VAT is essentially a transaction tax that belongs to the government; business establishments merely act as the tax bureau's collection agents. Throughout the gamut of merchandise production and distribution, VAT-registered enterprises simply pass the VAT on to their customers, who in turn pass it further on to their own customers, and so on, until it culminates with the end-users who, with no one to pass the VAT on, ultimately bears its full brunt. Admittedly, all articles of commerce will eventually end with the consumers. Nonetheless, the study group had reasonably sought to isolate certain services whose gross receipts clearly come from first and single-stage transactions.

It's a source of relief that the President has seen the wisdom of exempting banks. It was unfortunate that she did not when the nation's professionals last year, and much earlier the hotels and food outlets, were removed from the exemption list.

With all due respect, the perception is not baseless, if unkind, that the President tends to cast a moist eye upon the VAT-related tribulations of the consumers only when her administration's flagship programs, such as housing after the redoubled tax on banks, had been directly or indirectly put in jeopardy. Wittingly or unwittingly, she could not care less even if, because of the VAT on doctor's fees, the common *tao* had since been spending at least 10 percent more for medical care; or if the legions that flock daily to McDonald's or Jollibee, for example, have to pay more for a hamburger.

Meanwhile, when will the Bureau of Internal Revenue stop making the VAT Law as intolerably comprehensive as it already is?

—RUDY L. CORONEL,
10 Venus St., Golden Country
Homes, Alangilan, Batangas City

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Mega Manila

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

WHEN the Spaniards first arrived, Maynila was already a bustling settlement of about 4,000 people, mainly clustered around what is now Tondo then ruled by Rajah Suliman.

That was in 1571. Today, "Maynila" has expanded into Metro Manila or the National Capital Region, an administrative area that includes 17 cities and towns. In the last government census, conducted in 2000, the NCR had a population of almost 10 million, which is projected to have reached about 12 million today, give or take 1 or 2 million depending on the time of day.

Four thousand people in 1571—that's the population today of a few streets in Manila. As for the figure of 12 million, that's double the total national population of the Philippines at the turn of the 20th century.

Much more than many other countries, our national activities—economics, politics, even culture—are centered around the capital. This is reflected in the population figures as well. After Metro Manila, the next largest Philippine metropolitan urban area is Davao City with a relatively small population of 1.1 million.

Anti-family planning groups argue that a large population is good for the economy, fueling economic growth. Well, tell that to Manileños, and I mean the core city of Manila. When I wrote the other week about how Manila Bay's famous sunsets were marred by the waters' terrible pollution, exemplified by slippers being washed ashore, a friend of mine, Dr. Babes Nazareno, texted in to quip about the slippers probably coming from Baseco, a congested urban poor area in Manila. We had visited Baseco a year ago, and listened to the stories of women who said they had to go out of Manila just to get family planning services because the city government does not allow artificial contraception.

But Manila probably need not worry. Long bursting at its seams with problems of pollution and crime, many of Rajah Suliman's descendants have long fled, the city's population dropping through the years. The upper classes ended up in subdivisions scattered throughout Metro Manila, surrounded by high walls and security guards. The poor, especially new migrants coming in, have settled mainly in Quezon City and Caloocan City.

The two cities in fact have the largest barangays in the Philippines today. To help readers get a perspective on these population sizes, remember that most municipalities in the Philippines have a population of less than 50,000. Now, compare that figure to the populations of Metro Manila's super barangays:

The largest one is Barangay 176, better known as Bagong Silang, which had a population of 188,419 according to the last census. So huge is the barangay that even the Catholic Church had to divide it into three parishes.

After Bagong Silang, the three next largest barangays, population-wise, are all in Quezon City: Commonwealth with 120,569, Payatas with 112,690 and Batasan Hills with 109,723. I suspect all these figures are actually under-stated, since the slum colonies have large floating populations.

I intentionally cited barangay populations to underscore the gravity of the problem—just how does one expect barangay officials to take care of the needs of such large populations?

Looking at those Quezon City barangay figures, we shouldn't be surprised to hear that the Diliman-Commonwealth area has become a case study for urban blight. Name the problem and you have it there: traffic gridlock, pollution, substance abuse and crime. Just last week, one of my students boarded a jeep on Commonwealth Avenue, right outside UP Diliman. A few minutes after she boarded, she and all her fellow passengers were robbed at gun point, all this in broad daylight. When the passengers reported the crime, the police could only shrug their shoulders in sympathy, with this really useful advice: *Mag-ingat na lang* (Just be careful).

But how long can one "be careful" when the resources are just so stretched? I'm not just talking about law enforcement but of the basic services that could help reduce crime: jobs, education, health services, shelter.

Anti-family-planning groups say there are enough resources to go around and that eventually, as we achieve more equity, we will move forward even with this large population. It's really a variation of "trickle-down" theory, i.e., develop the upper classes first and benefits will trickle down to the poor. I think it was the renowned economist John Kenneth Galbraith who once compared that trickle-down theory to a horse trudging along a highway and "trickling down" something for the sparrows.

It's a race against time as the population continues to expand, through both biological reproduction and migration. Quezon City's slums are already so full, people are now invading new grounds, including UP's Diliman campus.

We could of course boast about all these large numbers. Metro Manila is already the world's fourth most densely populated city, more crowded than Shanghai, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Delhi. Are we aiming to be first?

The Guinness Book of World Records does list us as having the world's largest high school, in terms of enrollment. This is Rizal High School, which last year had 25,000 students, with 200 sections for first year alone. I read in the papers they actually ran out of student identification cards.

There's talk now about Mega Manila, extending as far north as Tarlac and as far south as Batangas. It's happening: I have friends who commute daily between school or work in Quezon City and homes in Laguna. We better be prepared to go beyond boasting and prepare to meet the mega problems that come with a Mega Manila.

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Angry Iraqi civilians kill 6 British troops

MAJJAR, Iraq—Iraqi civilians shot dead six British soldiers this week because of intrusive searches for arms in a conservative Shi'ite Muslim town in southern Iraq, residents said on Wednesday.

The British government said six soldiers were killed and eight wounded in two separate incidents on Tuesday near the city of Amarah, some 200 km north of Iraq's British-controlled second city, Basra.

Witnesses in the town of Majjar, 30 km south of Amarah, said the six were killed by residents after days of tension because of methods a British force used to search for heavy weapons.

At least two Iraqis died in Tuesday's clash at Majjar, residents said, adding that the British opened fire with plastic bullets to control a crowd after days of tension.

There was no immediate comment from the British military on the alleged details of the incident.

"These British soldiers came with their dogs and pointed weapons at women and children. As Muslims, we can't accept dogs at our homes," Rabee al-Malki said.

Residents said the soldiers first came to search for weapons on June 21, saying they burst into houses with dogs sniffing for weapons and with guns pointing at women and children.

After complaints from locals the British force agreed to halt the intrusive inspections, but two days later they returned with the same attitude, the residents said.

The Iraqis asked that the searches stop and promised to hand over weapons within two months, they said.

When the soldiers returned on Tuesday, thousands took to the streets to protest.

"I yelled at them because they pointed their rifles at a child. I told them 'don't do that' but a soldier hit me with the butt of his rifle in the face," one resident, who refused to give his name, said. "Then the shooting started." *Reuters*

DECADES-OLD DISPUTE

India concedes Tibet is part of China

BEIJING—India officially recognized Tibet as a part of China on Tuesday as the two neighbors tried to close the door on longstanding disputes and chart a new relationship.

Ties between the Asian giants have for decades been plagued by tensions over issues such as Tibet and the two countries fought a bitter border conflict in 1962.

But a joint declaration signed on Monday by Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, who is visiting China, and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, said India for the first time explicitly recognized Tibet as a part of China, according to a copy of the declaration released by the official Chinese news agency Xinhua late Tuesday.

As India is home to some 100,000 Tibetans who have fled China and provides the base for the Tibetan government-in-exile, the move could relieve a significant source of tension between New Delhi and Beijing.

China in turn agreed to open trade with India through the border state of Sikkim in northeastern India—in what some saw as tacit recognition by Beijing of India's sovereignty over Sikkim.

But in an indication the two countries still have some way to go before resolving points of contention, neither conceded there was a change in its policy—India on Tibet or China on Sikkim.

China's foreign ministry spokesperson Kong Quan called India's recognition of Tibet as Chinese territory "an important and positive expression."

But in a news briefing later Tuesday, India's External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha said India's stated position on Tibet in the declaration does not amount to a change in policy.

"India's position on Tibet has been consistent. And that continues to be the position today also," he said.

Under the declaration, India reiterated it will not allow Tibetans to conduct anti-China activities on its soil.

Sinha said that stance was also consistent with India's Tibet policy.

He added there was also no change in India's policy of allowing the Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile to remain in India.

"India regards his Holiness the Dalai Lama as a religious leader. I'd like to say there's no change in the position here," Sinha said.

India's stance had been that it acknowledged the suzerainty of China over Tibet, meaning it controls Tibet but allows it internal autonomy.

The position remained so until 1959 when the Dalai Lama fled to India and was given shelter following an uprising crushed militarily by Beijing.

Three years later, a bitter border conflict with China gave the Indian military a bloody nose, silencing New Delhi's foreign policy until Tuesday's joint declaration.

China's Kong on Tuesday also refuted Indian media reports that China has recognized India's sovereignty over the northeastern Indian state of Sikkim.

"I think the question of Sikkim is a question left over from history and is an enduring one," Kong said.

"This question cannot be solved overnight, but we hope this question can be resolved gradually." *AFP*

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin (center) reviews the honor guards during an official meeting ceremony at Horse Guards in London, June 24. Putin is on his first state visit to Great Britain marking also the first by a Russian leader in more than a century. AFP

Putin acts to mend ties with Britain over Iraq

LONDON—Britain laid on a sumptuous royal welcome on Tuesday for the first Russian state visit since 1874, with President Vladimir Putin immediately setting about mending fences over the Iraq war.

Surprising his audience by speaking in English at a state banquet at Buckingham Palace, he expressed his condolences over six British soldiers killed in Iraq earlier in the day.

"I would like to express... our sincere condolences for the loss of British soldiers in Iraq," he said. "It is clear to everyone that in spite of the differences that existed before, today we need to act jointly," he added.

Putin will meet British Prime Minister Tony Blair privately for only half an hour during his four-day visit to London and Edinburgh, but the two men will have other opportunities to chat at royal ceremonies and an energy conference.

Britain's Queen Elizabeth II opened the proceedings to welcome the former KGB spy with a similar gesture of rapprochement.

"It is no secret that there were significant differences between our countries earlier this year on how best to handle Iraq," she said.

"But now we are able to look forward together firmly in agreement on the route we have decided in the United Nations."

The president's visit may bring finalization of a $6.75 billion deal, in which oil company BP Plc would buy a 50 percent stake in TNK, Russia's third largest oil company.

Human rights groups are also urging Blair to turn up the heat on Putin over his war against Chechen rebels.

In the first such visit by a Russian head of state since Tsar Alexander II sailed to Britain 129 years ago, Putin flew into London's Heathrow airport where he was met by heir-to-the-throne Prince Charles.

Putin was then driven to central London for a formal ceremonial welcome by Queen Elizabeth and a guard of honor.

The Russian president laid a wreath outside the Imperial War Museum in south London in honor of some 27 million Soviet war dead from World War Two.

He will stay at Buckingham Palace during his trip, make a flying visit to Scotland on Wednesday and later open an energy conference and meet British businessmen. *Reuters*

Drug prevents prostate cancer, study finds

WASHINGTON—A high-dose version of a popular baldness drug also seems to prevent prostate cancer, a major killer of men, US researchers said on Tuesday.

The drug, finasteride, reduced prostate cancer rates by 25 percent in men participating in a research trial.

"These are very important results. This is the first intervention that has proved to reduce a man's risk of prostate cancer," Dr. Ian Thompson of the University of Texas Health Sciences Center at San Antonio, who led the study, told a news conference.

The drug used in the study is sold as Proscar, made by Merck & Co. Inc. Proscar was developed to stop the benign enlargement of the prostate that comes with normal aging.

A lower-dose version called Propecia became a best-selling baldness drug when it was also found to stop hair loss.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men, after skin cancer, and will affect nearly 221,000 men in the United States this year. About 29,000 men will die of it, making it the second-deadliest cancer for men after lung cancer.

Writing in the New England Journal of Medicine, Thompson and colleagues at the National Cancer Institute said they gave 9,000 men either finasteride or a placebo daily for seven years. The study was supposed to last for 10 years or until 2004 but was stopped early because of the dramatic results.

The researchers found that 18 percent of the men who took finasteride, or 803 men, developed prostate cancer compared to about 24 percent of men who took the placebo, or 1,147 men.

Proscar works by reducing the effects of testosterone.

There are other drugs sold to reduce benign prostatic hyperplasia—the enlargement of the prostate—but the researchers aid they are unlikely to affect prostate cancer rates. *Reuters*

Study: Smallpox vaccinations for public 'safe'

WASHINGTON—Smallpox vaccinations are safe, said a study released Tuesday, so entire populations may be protected from possible terrorist spread of the disease.

The US military vaccinated 450,000 troops without serious consequences, said the study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

"Broad smallpox vaccination programs may be implemented with fewer serious adverse events than previously believed," said the study's authors.

They analyzed the military smallpox vaccination program Dec. 13-May 28 and compared the data with studies 30 years old.

The study cited human factors in making the vaccinations safer: better staff training, patient education, warnings about adverse effects and even better bandages.

"Most adverse events occurred at rates below historical rates," said report contributors John Grabenstein of the Military Vaccine Agency and William Winkenwerder, Assistant Secretary of Defense.

Japan, Switzerland, Poland, Germany, France and Spain have plans to vaccinate large numbers their citizens.

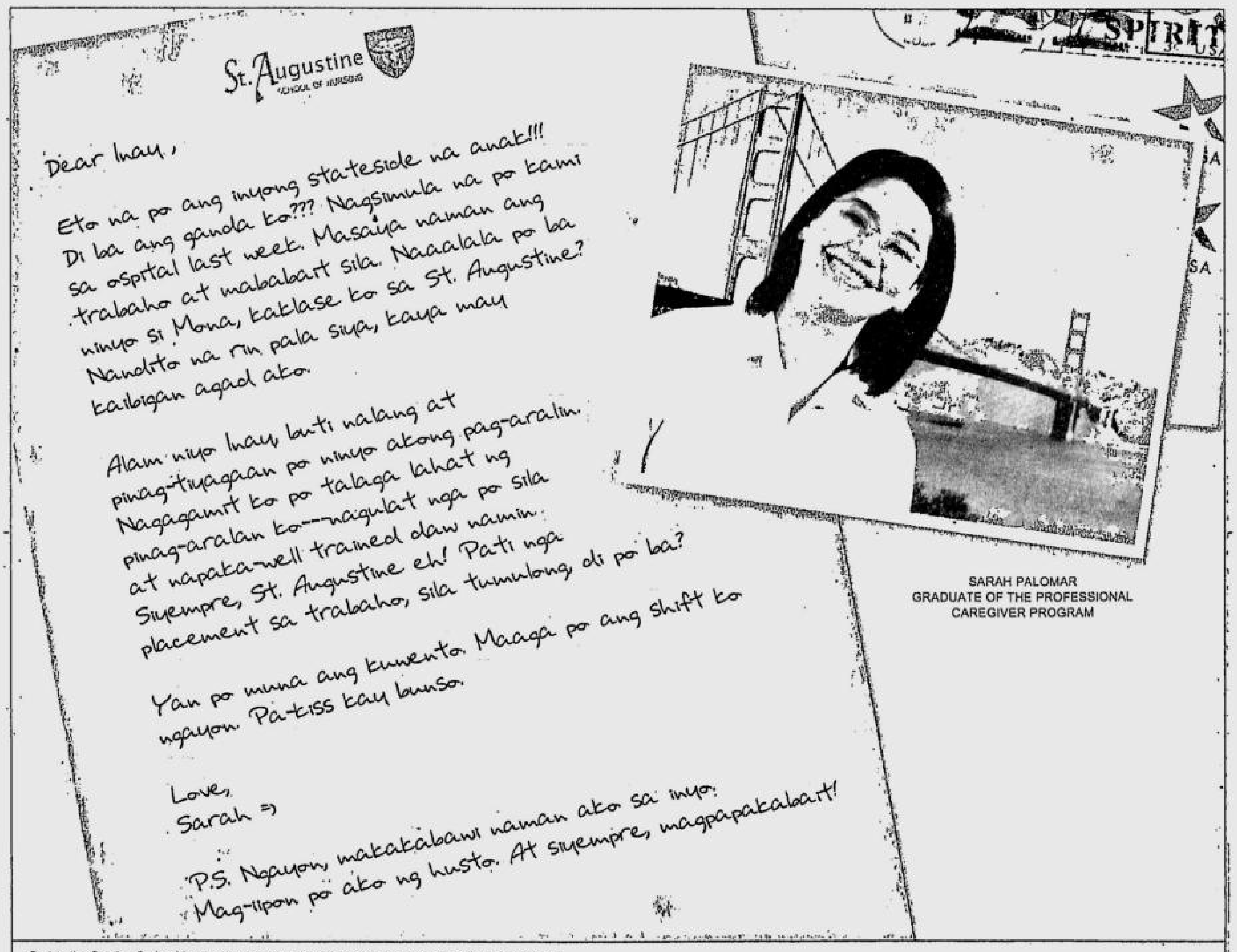
The World Health Organization declared smallpox eradicated from the human population more than 20 years ago. But recent terrorist activity suggests that it could be used against humans.

Scientists said technological advances over the years, including computerized reporting systems, and improved diagnostic and innoculation systems, have made smallpox vaccination safer.

Less than three percent of troops vaccinated needed time in sick bay, according to the report.

One developed encephalitis and 37 acute myopericarditis, a heart disease, following vaccination, but all recovered, said the study.

However, a related study also released Tuesday warned that heart infection can be a serious side effect of the vaccinations. *AFP*



St. Augustine
SCHOOL OF NURSING

Dear Inay,

Eto na po ang inyong stateside na anak!!! Di ba ang ganda ko??? Nagsimula na po kami sa ospital last week. Masaya naman ang trabaho at mababait sila. Naaalala po ba ninyo si Mona, kaklase ko sa St. Augustine? Nandito na rin pala siya, kaya may kaibigan agad ako.

Alam niyo Inay, buti nalang at pinag-tiyagaan po ninyo akong pag-aralin. Nagagamit ko po talaga lahat ng pinag-aralan ko—nagulat nga po sila at napaka-well trained daw namin. Siyempre, St. Augustine eh! Pati nga placement sa trabaho, sila tumulong di po ba?

Yan po muna ang kuwento. Maaga po ang shift ko ngayon. Pa-kiss kay bunso.

Love,
Sarah =)

P.S. Ngayon, makakabawi naman ako sa inyo. Mag-iipon po ako ng husto. At siyempre, magpapakabait!

SARAH PALOMAR
GRADUATE OF THE PROFESSIONAL
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ROUNDUP

Hybrid rice program launched

CALAPAN CITY—To increase production and income of farmers, the Hybrid Rice Commercialization Program was launched here by Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr. on June 19. The program covers 3,241 hectares of riceland in Occidental Mindoro. The agriculture department has allotted 3,241 bags of hybrid seeds worth P7.7 million for the program. A local farmer holds the record of having harvested the most—220 cavans in one hectare—using hybrid rice seeds.

Madonna Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Power action team

CALAPAN CITY—In response to power failures experienced by consumers in the first district of Oriental Mindoro, a power action team, composed of government officials and consultants, was organized on June 18 to give recommendations to the Department of Energy. In the power summit held early this year in Quezon City, four resolutions were presented to Energy Secretary Vince Perez: Giving priority by President Macapagal-Arroyo to the Mindoro Island Power Agenda; DOE lead in developing renewable sources of energy on the island; National Power Corp. to fix the diesel power plants, put up a substation in the city, install power transformers and expand the 69-kV transmission line; and opening of the Abra de Ilog-Puerto Galera Road to speed up and fix transmission lines.

Madonna Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Faith healer killed

BAY, Laguna—Police arrested yesterday a suspected member of a notorious gun-for-hire group at a checkpoint, a day after they gunned down a faith healer in Barangay Sta. Cruz, this town. Chief Supt. Edgardo Peralta, town police chief, identified the suspect as Germinigildo Reyes, 36, of Sariaya, Quezon. Police disclosed that Reyes and three other persons allegedly barged into the house of the victim, Andrei Padilla, 34, at about 9 p.m. The victim's cousin, Agustin Belda, 33, was also shot dead. Witnesses said they heard one of the suspects shouting at the victim whom he accused of sexually abusing his ailing niece.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Suspected robber slain

STA. MARIA, Bulacan—A suspected robber was killed while his companion was arrested after a shootout with police in Barangay Pulong Buhangin here on Tuesday. Reports identified the slain suspect as Jayson Guevarra, 26, of Barangay Poblacion. His companion, Jimmy de la Cruz, 19, was arrested. Supt. Enrico Salapong, town police chief, said Guevarra, De la Cruz and a third suspect, who later escaped, tried to rob a gasoline station in the village at about 1 a.m. Tuesday. The suspects reportedly fired at the responding policemen, prompting the latter to retaliate.

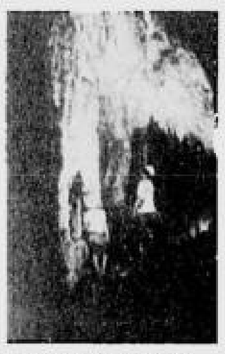
Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Olongapo's most wanted falls

OLONGAPO CITY—The city's most wanted criminal was killed during a shootout with police at Barangay Sta. Rita here on Tuesday. Senior Supt. Orlando Maddela Jr., city police chief, said Servando Digma, 46, fired at policemen who were sent to his safehouse in Barangay Sta. Rita to serve an arrest warrant. The policemen returned fire, killing Digma. Police said Digma was facing murder charges. A stray bullet hit Archimedes Cruz, 26, a resident. He was taken to James L. Gordon Memorial Hospital for treatment.

Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Treasure hunters probed


CALLAO CAVES

TUGUEGARAO CITY—The director of the Department of Tourism in Cagayan Valley has asked concerned local and environment officials to investigate reports that treasure hunters are exploring the cave system in Peñablanca, Cagayan. Blesilda Diwa said the treasure hunters must be stopped before they could destroy the caves in the town, including the Callao Caves, a famous tourist destination. Diwa cited reports showing that the treasure hunters were carrying generators and digging materials. The town's 300 caves are important tourism and archeological sites as these hold artifacts vital to the study of prehistoric Philippines.

Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

4 in judge's killing charged

BAGUIO CITY—Police filed murder charges against four suspects in the killing of a judge in Apayao on May 17 this year. Senior Supt. Rodolfo Anagaran, Apayao police director, filed the charges before the provincial prosecutor's office in Luna, Apayao, against Rolly Patayan, Peter Patayan Jr., Taruc Tuldong and Melchor Albano Jr. Police said the four were the principal suspects in the murder of Judge Pinera Biden in front of his house in Cabugao, Apayao. Biden sustained seven bullet wounds at his back from a 12-gauge shotgun, police said.

Rona Sales, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Shoe worker hacked dead

BAGUIO CITY—With a sharp blade used in cutting rubber in making shoes, a shoe worker allegedly hacked the back neck of another worker here Saturday night, police said. Paterno Guevara, 37, surrendered to the police after he was linked to the fatal hacking of Carlito Asilym, 35, at Reeds Bootery on Otek Street. The suspect got sore with Asilym, who ribbed him for being unmarried while they were drinking inside the shop, police said. Guevara fled but returned to the shop to get his things. Police found him there.

Mary Anne Quinones, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Best of Cagayan Valley

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Cagayan Valley's best products, festivals and tourist destinations will be featured in August as part of the ongoing Visit Philippines 2003 regional fair in Intramuros, Manila. Blesilda Diwa, regional director of the Department of Tourism, said the region's exhibit, dubbed "Pagayay ta Cagayan Valley," will be held on Aug. 13-15. To be featured in the exhibit are native delicacies and folk dances of Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino.

Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

3 nabbed in drug buy-bust

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Police arrested three persons in a drug buy-bust operation in Barangay Tanza last week. Arrested were Josephine Apil and her alleged couriers, Marietta Daudaguen and Benjamin Ignacio. Police said several informants and barangay officials reported that Apil had been selling shabu in the village. Confiscated from Apil were 30 grams of shabu, cellular phones, P13,372 cash and $67. The entrapment operation was organized after a policewoman, who posed as a bar girl, bought shabu from Apil on June 16.

Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Reyes aka Dulnuan of Ifugao

LAGAWE, Ifugao—The provincial board has passed a resolution adopting Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes as a son of Ifugao during the province's 37th founding anniversary last week. Reyes was given the name "Dulnuan" and a pair of g-strings, bolo, spear and Ifugao headgear. In the resolution, the board expressed its gratitude to Reyes "in facilitating the funding of all damaged structures in the province caused by calamities and his fatherly concern for the Ifugao tribe."

Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Illegal firearms seized

BAMBANG, Nueva Vizcaya—Police arrested a man for hiding illegal firearms and bullets in his house in Barangay San Leonardo in this town on Saturday. Reports said Eddie Benosa was arrested after police found a .30 cal. rifle, a shotgun, a .22 cal. revolver, a Magnum pistol and bullets from his house.

Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Dismissed top BIR exec to seek reconsideration

By Suzzane B. Salva
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—A high-ranking official of the Bureau of Investigation in Central Visayas (BIR-7) will ask the Office of the Ombudsman-Visayas to reconsider its decision dismissing him from government service for accumulating millions of pesos in unexplained wealth.

Edgardo Labella, legal counsel of Nieto Agad Racho, chief of BIR-7's Special Investigation Division, said they would point out in their motion for reconsideration "matters which were overlooked" by the anti-graft office. Among these, Labella said, were the absence of a complainant and the failure of the Ombudsman to show original certification from three banks that his client had millions of pesos in deposit.

"We trust in the sense of objectivity and fairness of the Office of the Ombudsman (and) we hope that the same will be rectified," said Labella, a former Ombudsman director for the Visayas and city councilor.

The Ombudsman-Visayas ordered the dismissal of Racho after finding him guilty of dishonesty and falsification of public documents.

Visayas Ombudsman Primo Miro also ordered Racho to be permanently disqualified from holding public office.

Racho was found to have deposits in three banks amounting to more than P5.8 million, which were not reflected in his Statement of Assets and Liabilities (SAL).

The items, which were allegedly not declared, included Racho's savings deposit of P2.93 million with the MetroBank's Cebu Tabunoc Branch, P1.22 million with the Philippine Commercial International Bank, and a Gold savings account of P1.63 million with the Bank of the Philippine Islands.

Pio Dargantes, Graft Investigation Officer I, also noted that Racho had invoked his right to remain silent as well as his right to confront the witnesses against him during the preliminary conference on Nov. 26, 2002.

The investigation stemmed from a complaint lodged by dyHP Balita Action Team of Radio Mindanao Inc. in 2001 over Racho's alleged unexplained wealth. Racho was then the revenue district officer of the BIR's Cebu South District Office.

"With due respect to the findings, Racho begs to disagree that he opted to remain silent and that he waived his right (to confront the witnesses). How could he remain silent when he attended the preliminary conference on Nov. 26, 2002? Nobody attended," Labella said.

During the hearing, he added that Racho even looked for his accuser, but there was no complainant.

Labella said his client was not also shown any certified true copy of a bank certificate that would show that he had kept millions of pesos in deposit.

WE NEED PEACE IN MINDANAO

CHILDREN join a peace rally on a bridge in Pagalungan, Maguindanao. RYAN LIM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Evacuees call for bilateral ceasefire, mount peace rally in Maguindanao

By Jeffrey M. Tupas
PDI Mindanao Bureau

PAGALUNGAN, Maguindanao—"We need peace in Mindanao. Ceasefire now!"

This was the resounding call of some 3,000 evacuees from this town and Pikit, North Cotabato as they gathered here Tuesday to demand the declaration of a bilateral ceasefire by the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Holding posters and banners, the evacuees staged a rally at the town plaza to express their desire to go home.

The movement was called "Bakwit Power: People's Exodus to Peace," but the evacuees preferred to call it "Suara Kalilintad" or voice of peace.

"From here, we take steps that we hope will soon take us home to our communities," the evacuees said in a manifesto.

Sahara Dilaab, an elementary pupil, could only hope that her family and her entire community will have peaceful lives again.

"*Kami'y nababahala na sa tuwing may putok kaming naririnig . . . kaya hinihiling naming bigyan na sana ng kapayapaan ang Pagalungan* (We are concerned every time we hear gunshots . . . that's why we ask that we be given peace in Pagalungan)," she said.

Intan Bangon, one of the leaders of the Pagalungan evacuees, said they had all been wishing for long and lasting peace in their community.

"But how can we obtain peace if the burning of houses, destruction of properties and even killing of human lives and animals have doubled and even tripled?" Bangon asked.

She said the evacuees' dream of lasting peace would always be affected by the fact that their sources of livelihood were destroyed by the war.

"But as individuals, I believe that we can obtain peace through ourselves," Bangon added.

The evacuees presented six demands:

- The government and the MILF must declare a bilateral and unconditional ceasefire.
- They should resume peace talks.
- They should ensure the safe, organized and permanent return of the evacuees.
- Armed groups must keep away from civilian-inhabited areas.
- Continued government food, livelihood and other forms of assistance to both returned evacuees and those still in the evacuation centers.
- Continued government program to rehabilitate houses, schools and other public services damaged by the war.

Fr. Roberto Layson, OMI, Pikit coordinator of the Parish Inter-religious Dialogue, said the evacuees would continue to hold silent protests in front of the evacuation centers until the government and the MILF heard their appeal.

Yesterday, the evacuees were scheduled to march along the national highway-from Mahad evacuation center in Pikit and Pagalungan to Pagagawan in Maguindanao.

"The evacuees are saying that there were fighting even during the ceasefire was still in effect which resulted in their evacuation. How much more now where there is no ceasefire? What is the guarantee that the MILF and government will not fight?" Layson said.

"Only a bilateral ceasefire from both government and MILF will facilitate the safe return of the evacuees," he added.

The government, through Ging Deles of the National Anti-Poverty Commission, gave assurance that the evacuees' demands would be heard by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"It is time to go home, you say-this is what we also believe. We are one in calling for lasting peace and development in your areas," Deles said.

She said the President, during an oversight committee on internal security meeting Monday, directed the presidential adviser on strategic concerns, Renato de Villa, to oversee the evacuation centers in Mindanao, guided by three objectives: stabilize and secure the original places of the evacuees, facilitate their safe return, and fast-track the peace process.

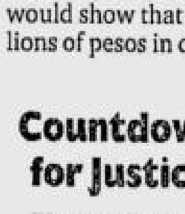
"This is a breakthrough. You can see on the ground some changes in the coming weeks . . . we are moving on fast with our preparation for the peace talks," Deles said.

In Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte, Moro leaders in a dialogue on Saturday appealed to the Christian populace to trust them.

"*Hindi naman po ang lahat sa amin ay traydor. Hindi naman lahat sa amin ay mamamatay tao. Tulad ninyo, hangad po naming mabuhay na tahimik* (Not all of us are traitors or killers. We also want peaceful lives like you do," Moro leader Boy Arabi said.

The dialogue was held to ease the tension following the MILF attack on the town on May 4 that left 28 people dead and 22 others wounded. *With a report from Lullie Micabalo, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Countdown for Justice


WAPILE

IT IS exactly 409 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

Gov't anti-poverty program taps lotto

BAGUIO CITY—Lotto was introduced as an anti-poverty vehicle of the Macapagal administration, after the government-sponsored gaming facility was included among several poverty alleviation instruments in a Tuesday briefing given to a depressed Ibaloi community at Camp John Hay.

The National Anti-Poverty Commission selected Barangay Happy Hallow in Baguio City among five beneficiary sites of Kapit-bisig Laban sa Kahirapan (Kalahi) program.

Ernielai Dancel, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office coordinator in Urdaneta City, said state-sponsored gambling has been generating enough funds to benefit poor communities like Happy Hallow.

She was addressing Happy Hallow's Ibaloi residents, who were identified this week as Kalahi beneficiaries in the city. "Are we supposed to buy lotto tickets to become rich?" a resident asked in Ilocano.

Kalahi brings together the resources of government agencies to focused programs that combat poverty in a Kalahi beneficiary community.

The program addresses land tenure, the economy and the social demands identified by its beneficiaries, said Undersecretary Susan Abaya.

She said Kalahi had provided President Macapagal-Arroyo her biggest successes, despite the poverty-alleviation program's low-key character. Kalahi services 371 villages in 159 towns and cities.

The PCSO was allowed to market lotto when the agency was given time to detail its Kalahi commitments to the Ibalois.

"Please continue (patronizing) this product (lotto)," Dancel asked the community, after she pointed out that beneficiary towns are guaranteed certain benefits from the PCSO's donor program.

But Dancel cautioned the Ibalois from coming in droves to the PCSO. She said the PCSO donations were processed only when beneficiaries have enough documentation about their economic plight.

Kalahi officials later told the INQUIRER that the PCSO marketing speech was unintended and was never a part of their anti-poverty program. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

5 rebels die, 2 wounded in N. Samar

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Five suspected communist rebels were killed while two others were seriously wounded in an encounter with government troopers on Tuesday morning in a remote village in Lope de Vega town, Northern Samar.

Four of the fatalities were identified as Lozan Baria, alias Kulalaknit; Archie Solomon, alias Angel or Joy; Nonoy Poldo and one alias Bitoy.

Brig. Gen. Cezar Tiongson, commanding general of the 803rd Infantry Brigade based in Catarman, Northern Samar, said the identity of the fifth fatality was not immediately known.

He said he had received information that the two wounded rebels were brought by their comrades to a hospital in Calbayog City.

Tiongson said the slain members of the New People's Army (NPA), allegedly headed by Bitoy, belonged to the Amado Petante Command operating under the Northern Samar Front Committee I.

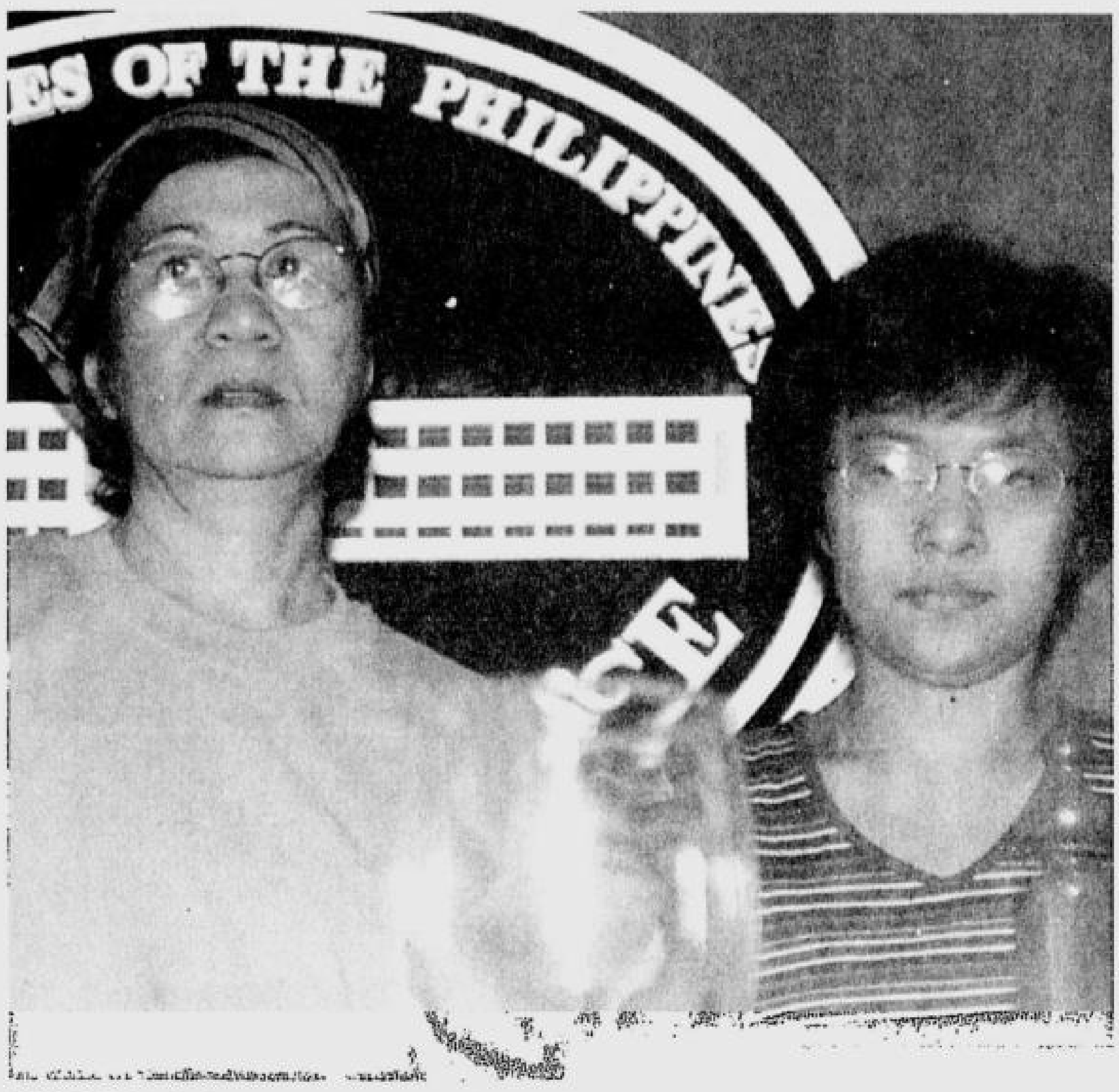
Tiongson said soldiers of the 63rd Infantry Battalion, headed by Lt. Col. Benito Uzi, chanced upon a group of about 20 NPA rebels at about 9 a.m., allegedly demanding food and money from residents of Sitio Cagpaco, Barangay Curre, about 5 km from the town proper of Lope de Vega.

An exchange of gunfire ensued, lasting for about 30 minutes, said Tiongson in an interview over his mobile phone.

The rebels, he added, retreated toward the mountains, leaving behind their fallen comrades as well as three M-16 rifles, 10 magazines and two rifles.

The encounter occurred an hour before soldiers belonging to the 19th IB recovered two M-16 rifles and three Carbine rifles in La Paz, Leyte.

2 top NPA leaders in Cordillera arrested



SUSPECTED rebel suspects, Evelyn Cruz Bedaña and Josephine Gammad Perez, are presented to media at Camp Aguinaldo.

JOAN BONDOC

BAGUIO CITY—Two New People's Army leaders believed to be behind the blasting of the Marcos bust in Tuba, Benguet, on Dec. 29 last year, were arrested in Barangay Bakakeng here on Monday.

In a statement, Lt. Col. Preme Monta, information officer of the Army's Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom), identified the arrested NPA leaders as Evelyn Cruz Bedaña, alias Araceli Arciaga and "Rhoda," alleged secretary of the NPA's Ilocos-Cordillera regional party committee (ICRC); and Josephine Perez, alias "Loren," political officer of the Komiteng Larangan Gerilya Sinag of the ICRC.

The two were presented to journalists at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City yesterday.

Monta claimed that Bedaña, 53, was among the NPA leaders who ordered Juvencio Balweg, a top leader of the NPA operating in Abra, to kill his brother, former rebel priest Conrado Balweg, in Malibcong, Abra, in 1999.

The suspects also allegedly ordered the assassinations of Mayor Teodoro Hernaez of Sta. Lucia, Ilocos Sur in 2001, and Mayor Clarence Benwaren of Tineg, Abra last year, Armed Forces chief Gen. Narciso Abaya said at a press briefing.

The statement said the suspects were also behind an attack on government soldiers in Abra on May 16, the bombing of a telecommunication tower in Ilocos Sur and various NPA-initiated killings.

"They were supposed to meet high-ranking members of the regional party committee in the area for consultations . . . they were about to discuss CPP plans in the coming month that would include possible mass actions during the Sona and during the next elections," said Maj. Gen. Pedro Cabuay, deputy chief for intelligence.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is expected to deliver her State of the Nation Address when Congress opens sessions next month.

Recovered from Bedaña and Perez, 25, were a .22 cal. and a .38 cal. revolvers, explosives, 12 pieces of blasting caps, a blasting device, a timing device, a detonating cord, and anti-government documents that Monta described as having "high intelligence value."

The statement quoted Arciaga as admitting that her capture would create a "psychological setback" to the Communist Party of the Philippines, "considering that the underground movement could hardly develop and replace political cadres of (Arciaga's) caliber."

In Bataan, two NPA leaders were killed while a policeman was wounded in an encounter with government soldiers in an upland village in Abucay on Tuesday.

Monta said the first slain rebel was known only as "Ka Ringo" and "Ka Kardo," reportedly deputy secretary of the NPA's Bataan-Zambales party committee.

Monta identified the second rebel as Lizelle Lalu, or "Ka Che," reportedly political officer of the Bataan guerrilla front.

Both rebels belonged to the NPA's Lino Blas Command, said Senior Supt. Sahiron Salim, Bataan police director. Their bodies were recovered on Tuesday night and taken to a funeral parlor in Bataan.

Monta said residents and officials of Sitio Gomez at Barangay Mabatang in Abucay, where the one-hour gun battle occurred, confirmed the identities of the slain rebel leaders.

Salim said the rebels were led by Ka Ringo and one Allan Pardo or "Ka Ian." The group was reportedly operating in the towns of Orani, Samal and Abucay.

PO1 Noelson Mendoza of the Abucay police was wounded in the fight and was taken to the ICMC Medical Center in this city, Salim said.

In Nueva Ecija, an Army official said government troops engaged about 15 NPA rebels in a gunfight in Rizal town on Wednesday morning. *Tonette Orejas and Greg Refraccion, PDI Central Luzon Desk, and TJ Burgonio in Manila*

Militants destroy 'demonizing' billboards

TAGUM CITY—Local militant groups have started destroying billboards that tagged them as New People's Army (NPA) rebels.

The billboards identified leaders of the human rights group Karapatan, Anak Pawis and Bayan Muna as NPA rebels. The structures were set up by the Southern Mindanao Alliance in Response to Terrorism (Smart).

"We will destroy all these billboards that demonize our groups," Juliet de los Reyes of the Anak Pawis said, adding that they would file libel charges against Smart.

Senior Supt Catalino Cuy, provincial police chief, said Smart was "basically an anti-NPA program initiated by the Philipine National Police."

But Cuy agreed with the militant groups' claim that they were not NPA rebels. "They are legal fronts of the Communist Party of the Philippines, not NPA members," he charged.

Ariel Casilao, secretary general of Karapatan-Mindanao, said the move to link their groups to the NPA was a "desperate act by the military and police aimed at discrediting legitimate groups like us who are fighting for the human rights of the oppressed sectors of our society."

"We are not pro-NPA or propagandists of the NPA. We are a legitimate group fighting for the violated rights of the poor," he said.

Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau

IMPORTANT ADVISORY
To All Motor Vehicle Owners
Regarding Vehicle Registration

Register your vehicle on time.
- To avoid hassle and penalty, register your vehicle on time. (See registration schedule.)
- You can register your vehicle one (1) month in advance of your weekly schedule.
- Always bring your Certificate of Registration (CR) and Official Receipt (OR).

Make sure your Certificate of Emission Compliance (CEC) is verified and authenticated under the Motor Vehicle Registration System (MVRS) of the LTO-IT Project.
- Have your vehicle tested at an accredited/authorized Private Emission Testing Center (PETC) connected to the LTO-IT System.
- Get your CEC first before going to LTO.

Make sure your Compulsory Third Party Liability-Certificate of Cover (CTPL-COC) is verified and authenticated under the LTO-IT Project's MVRS.
- Purchase your CTPL-COC from insurance companies connected to the LTO-IT System.
- Get your CTPL-COC first before going to LTO.

REMEMBER: A CEC and CTPL-COC that are not verified and authenticated under the LTO-IT Project's MVRS will not be accepted by LTO and will be deemed INVALID for vehicle registration.

Deal directy with LTO personnel.
- Go to the nearest LTO district office to register your vehicle.
- Before going to the LTO district office, make sure all required documents are complete to avoid inconvenience.
- Do not deal with fixers.

MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION SCHEDULE

MCS 524

Represents the monthly schedule

Represents the weekly schedule

Last Digit of Plate Number	Monthly Schedule	Middle Digit of Plate Number	Weekly Schedule
1	January		
2	February		
3	March	1-2-3	1st Week of the Month
4	April		
5	May	4-5-6	2nd Week of the Month
6	June		
7	July	7-8	3rd Week of the Month
8	August		
9	September	9-0	Last Week of the Month
0	October		

NOTE: For Motorcycle Plate, use the third digit for the weekly schedule.

- If you fail to register within the monthly schedule, you will pay the penalty of 50% of the basic registration fee.
- If you fail to register within the weekly schedule, you will pay the penalty of P200 (P100 for motorcycle).

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon
E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Floreño G. Solmirano

Wacky ways to save the mangroves

THE DWINDLING mangrove forests in Aroroy, Masbate

PHOTOS BY JOHNNY VILLENA

By Alan Pelayo
Aroroy, Masbate

THE SIMPLE folk of the rich coastal town of Aroroy in Masbate waited with much eagerness for the "once-in-a-blue-moon" event in their lives.

When the long wait finally came to an end, they celebrated with great pride and joy the "royal wedding" of their future "King" and "Queen."

They even marked days of festivities in honor of the couple before the wedding, which was itself accorded "full military honors" by the "royal guards."

No less than society's high and mighty, like top local officials, served as "godparents."

On the big day, the officiating "priest" asked the couple: "Do you promise to love each other during high tide or low tide, during full moon or not?" The couple each happily "replied," "I do."

The joy of the people was complete when the two were crowned "King" and "Queen" immediately after the ceremony.

Indeed, it was a wedding fit only for royalties—except that the "King" and the "Queen" were eight-legged crustaceans.

Actually, it was like watching children at play in a make-believe world, but far from it. The "game" was played by no less than the mayor, vice mayor, some councilors, local government officials and prominent personalities of the town. And it was a sight to see them play their parts "seriously."

Had they gone mad when they acceded to be party to this show, and even take center stage as "godparents" of the "couple"? Not so. They were only trying to save the depleting mangroves of Aroroy through a festival they called "Wacky Rodeo."

Unlike the Rodeo Masbateño, which involves cattle, the Wacky Rodeo involves crabs.

Events and competitions involve different aspects of men and women's skills in handling crabs for entertainment purposes, said Romeo Jazul, Aroroy Tourism Council chair and the brains behind the festival.

The municipal council passed a resolution setting the date of the festival during the full moon of May. This year, it was held on May 14-16.

Jazul, a medical doctor by profession, explained that "remarkable extraordinary events are directly felt and observed during full moon."

"Some effects on earth are changes on the water level and its creatures. As the tide changes, catching fish seems tough; the fish would not bite," he explained.

He added that the moonbeams or moonshine affected the molecular arrangements in newly honed or sharpened blades. "When these blades are exposed to moonshine for quite sometime, the same become dull," he said, referring to the clamps of the crabs.

"These (are) the reasons such funny and exciting activity is called 'Wacky Rodeo,'" he said.

The festival, which has been officially recognized by the Department of Tourism, aimed at developing Aroroy's thriving crab industry. It also served as an expression of concern for nature and gratitude to the Almighty for the year's bounty in the crab industry.

Confusion

Some people confuse Wacky Rodeo with Rodeo Masbateño, the province's main tourist attraction. Several tourists even traveled to Aroroy, 72 km from Masbate City, expecting to see and appreciate cowboys' skills in a series of competitions, only to witness fishermen's skills in handling crabs.

Jazul said the Aroroy Tourism Council developed the idea of a "rodeo for the masses," since only a few have *ganaderia* or cattle ranches to enjoy the cattle rodeo.

"Only the rich can celebrate (Rodeo Masbateño)," he said.

The Wacky Rodeo also served to promote the Rodeo Masbateño Festival-Masbate. The province has been declared the Rodeo Capital of the Philippines.

Mangrove

Local officials are now more concerned about the continued destruction of their coastlines, specifically the fast depletion of mangroves, the breeding areas of crabs and other crustaceans, due to rampant illegal practices of some fishermen.

. Seeing the immediate need to save the mangroves, organizers of the festival decided to adopt the theme: "Save Our Mangroves for Our Crabs in Harmony with Nature."

"Without the mangroves, there will be no more crabs," Jazul said.

Having spent most of his life in Aroroy, Jazul noted the fast denudation of mangrove areas. The town, he said, used to have hundreds of hectares of mangrove forests. Now, the forests are found in only six coastal barangays—Talabahan, Amuroy, Puro, Talawing, San Isidro and San Agusin.

Jazul envisioned Aroroy having mangrove forests like those of Palawan.

"For as long as the natural habitats of these crustaceans are kept unharmed, we shall always have the reason to enjoy this one-of-a-kind festival," Mayor Arturo Vicente Maristela Jr. said in his message.

Leopoldo Rubia, vice president for operations of Agri-Aqua Network International, said Aroroy should establish mangrove sanctuaries if it wanted its crab industry to thrive.

"Fishermen should respect the sanctuary. Fishing would not be allowed except hook-and-line so we could give a chance for the small fries to grow (sic)," he said.

Farmers, he said, should be educated on how to take care of the mangroves.

In support of the planned sanctuary, the municipal council promised to pass an ordinance prohibiting the catching of pregnant crabs and allocating a budget for the procurement of stocks.

"Maybe, we should increase the next budget in October (to include) the preservation of our marine resources," said Vice Mayor Enrico Capinig.

Aroroy, which has 41 villages, declared Barangay Balanay a reserved area for marine sanctuary, but this was not realized because of strong resistance of local residents whose livelihood were affected by the no-fishing policy imposed in the project's vicinity.

However, Rubia believed that educating the fishermen and making them realize the importance of a sanctuary was the key.

Reforestation

Aroroy has identified the coastal barangay of San Agustin as another area for mangrove reforestation.

Maristela, whose family owns a vast land of fishponds in the area, donated five hectares to be used for reforestation. Unfortunately, these areas are not suited for mangrove development, according to Rubia.

"I already told him that it was not suited for sanctuary because crabs needed a sanctuary that included a river channel where the fresh water from the river would neutralize the salt content of the sea water. These crablets needed a salinity level lower than that of the sea water," he explained.

Rubia, who also owns many fishponds in the area, pledged to use his expertise and resources in overseeing the establishment of mangrove sanctuary.

"I can help (in the establishment of) the mangrove sanctuary, with our Agri-Aqua Network International," he said.

THE WACKY Crab Rodeo Festival Parade in the streets of Aroroy

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King Donato weds Queen Cecilia

By Ronnie Lorejo

THE WACKY Rodeo of Aroroy, Masbate featured a series of interesting and entertaining contests that displayed the various skills of local residents in handling the *alimango* (crabs).

Among the games are the crab race, crab relay, tetracathlon, crab tying, crab hunting and retrieving, putting seven crabs in a pot, and crab cooking.

This year's challenge, held last month, cost eight bite wounds for Frankie Scarlan Jr., 36, who won in the crab relay.

Scarlan said he just had to bear the excruciating pain from the crab's pincers, so that its body parts would still be intact for the next stage of the battle. He did not resist or struggle, lest he crushed the crabs into pieces and be disqualified like most of his opponents.

Crab run

Agustin Ceres, of Barangay Poblacion, won the tetracathlon as he bested his opponents all the way by swimming a 50-meter distance, grabbing wild crabs and carrying them while biking to the finish line.

Antonio Canlivan was able to make a live crab crawl to the finish line in just 29 minutes and 53 seconds. He used a coconut leaf midrib to drive his crab, without pushing and touching it.

In just 16 seconds, Eden Ireneo, 44, of Barangay Puro, transferred seven wild crabs from a basin into a pot with bare hands, leaving all her opponents behind, wounded with crab bites.

Ireneo, a barangay health worker, said she had been catching the wild crustaceans from their own fishpond since childhood. It takes three months to raise a crab, she said.

Ireneo's family can harvest at least two kilos daily from a fishpond of two hectares. She sells a medium-sized crab at P300 a kilogram to a middleman, who sells it in the market at P500 a kilogram.

Crab king, queen

Serving as the main highlight of the festival is the selection of the crab king and queen based on size, weight and physical appearance.

(CLOCKWISE from left photo) Judges search for the biggest crabs during the competition; one of the injured contestants is given emergency treatment; crabs are picked up from a muddy plastic container, in this manner; winner of the crab relay competition.

PHOTOS BY JOHNNY VILLENA

This year's winner as Crab King 2003 was Donato, which weighed 2 kg. He was named after his owner, 15-year-old Donato Reyes Velasco, of Barangay Poblacion.

Velasco said he had been helping his father Vicente buy crabs from various fishpond operators and supply them with crablets.

His secret for raising the Crab King is simple: spare it from being harvested.

King Donato is now 7 months old. Crabs are harvested at an average age of four months.

Crab Queen is 1.5-kg "Cecilia" named after her owner, Cecilia Purificacion, of Barangay Panique.

The Crab King and Crab Queen were then wed. Reception was held at the Aroroy covered court, depicting the culture, customs and traditions of Aroronians.

Crab mentality

But the festival was not all about wacky games.

"Aroroy celebrates the wacky festival with a sense of advocacy to remind people of their responsibility in the sustainable use of marine resources," said Tappy C. Espenilla, municipal secretary, who tried his luck in some of the contests.

"Crab mentality has taken on a new meaning for the Aroronians. We don't actually buy the traditional negative connotation that crabs, when placed in a pan, tend to pull one another down as they try to reach the top," Espenilla denied.

Instead, he pointed out that crab mentality should connote cooperation and unity.

"In a literal sense, crabs, in a similar situation, get on top of one another to form a makeshift ladder to help them reach the brim. That's what is really happening in Aroroy."

He said residents have long been sharing the town's marine resources and have forged virtual partnerships in their crab-growing trade for years. "This is why we have actually fallen for the juicy crustaceans."

GMA: Stop bickering over who should lead war on drugs

From page A1

After informally tapping Sen. Robert Barbers as anti-drug czar, former Interior Secretary Alfredo Lim was appointed presidential anti-drug adviser, although Interior Secretary Jose Lina chairs the Dangerous Drugs Board and Anselmo Avenido Jr. heads the Philippine Drug Enforcement, Agency.

After some confusing statements in the previous days, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye yesterday clarified that PDEA remained the principal enforcement agency. He said other groups tapped for the anti-drug campaign should coordinate with the PDEA.

DDB overhaul

But Bunye hinted of a possible overhaul in the DDB. "The DDB chair is not ex-officio which means that it does not have to be the DILG (Department of Interior and Local Government) Secretary," Bunye said at a briefing in Malacañang.

This was Bunye's reply when queried on the fate of Lina whose position as DDB head had been undermined by the President's decision to invite Barbers and his colleagues at Manila's Western Police District—Lim, ex-Col. Rey Jaylo and ex-Maj. Lucio Margallo—to the crusade.

Bunye explained that both the DDB and Barbers (as chair of the Senate committee on illegal drugs) would have oversight powers on the PDEA. Barbers and Lim would act as advisers to the program, the presidential spokesperson said.

Bunye said the appointment papers of Lim (as presidential adviser for illegal drugs) and Jaylo and Margallo (as directors of the PDEA's special operations group) were still being finalized.

While Lim has already recruited local government officials known for their strong arm tactics against drug pushers, Lim said that it was better for the advisers to wait a while for their appointments before taking any action.

Clarifying the roles of the different government agencies involved in the renewed war against illegal drugs will be tackled by the National Anti-Drug Summit today, according to Cebu City Rep. Antonio Cuenco, chair of the House committee on dangerous drugs.

Lim denied that there was a turf war between him and the PDEA.

"There's no truth in that; we're quite surprised about those turf war reports," Lim said in his weekday afternoon radio program 'Aksyon Ngayon,' aired over dzMM.

Lim, a former National Bureau of Investigation director, theorized that the reports on turf war were floated by drug lords and their allies made nervous by the government's launching of a no-nonsense battle against illegal drugs.

Avenido real anti-drug czar

He acknowledged Avenido as the "anti-drug czar" since the agency is the lead government office in the campaign against illegal drugs.

Lim said he and Barbers met with Avenido the other day to discuss the exact role of the so-called "Four Aces" in the war against illegal drugs.

Teamwork

"The President wants teamwork, not misunderstanding. We're not kids, we're professionals, and we understand the problems that lie on our shoulders," he said.

It was feared that the tapping of Barbers and Lim could undermine PDEA's operations and weaken the DDB.

But Lim said "it is very clear" that Avenido was the anti-drug czar. He said he and Barbers would only be mere advisers to Avenido.

"If he likes what we advise him, he can follow them," Lim said, adding that Margallo, Jaylo and all other people he may tap for the anti-drug campaign would receive direct orders from Avenido and could not operate independently from the PDEA.

Likening the anti-drug campaign to a basketball game, Lim said the drug syndicate team was so organized that it could not be completely defeated up to now.

Rights violation

Not everyone, however, is very happy with the appointment of the "Four Aces"—Barbers, Lim, Jaylo and Margallo.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan said Barbers, Lim "and their swashbuckling, trigger-happy gang" were notorious for cutting corners in police work and violating the rights of suspected criminals.

"The tough cop image may look good to a public desperate for a solution to the drug problem, but that image was created at the expense of due process and human rights," said Bayan secretary general Teodoro Casiño in a statement.

"The title 'Dirty Harry' is not there for nothing," Casiño said. "It means resorting to intimidation, torture and even summary execution of suspects. It means violating established procedures and rules of engagement." *With reports from Gil Cabacungan Jr. in Manila and Jhunnex Napallacan PDI Visayas Bureau*

9 out of 10 test centers below par

From page A1

portation Office and later the Department of Transportation and Communication "showed deficiencies" based on DOH standards.

The DOH found the violations when it conducted surveillance and monitoring of drug testing centers all over the country during the first quarter.

In its April 25 report, the DOH team said it found that 70 percent of the testing centers violated the requirements for the specimen collection area, which should not have any water source that could be used to dilute the urine and affect the results of the drug tests.

No records

The violation did not stop there. More than half, or 60 percent, of drug testing centers did not keep a logbook of specimens or kept proper records, while 30 percent did not even have the chain of custody forms.

The chain of custody form is a "very important" requirement because it identifies all the people—collector, courier and laboratory personnel—who handled the samples, according to Reyes.

The DOH will be taking over the accreditation of screening centers and confirmatory testing centers on July 1 to unify the standards for drug testing centers and to professionalize screening as mandated by Republic Act No. 9165, or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

Reyes said the government would revoke the licenses of violators, but it would set a transitory period for the drug testing centers to comply with DOH standards. The DOH, however, has not yet determined how long the grace period will be.

No doctors

"There's really a problem ... We will enforce the standards of the DOH so we can assure the public of quality," said Reyes, who also acts as representative of Health Undersecretary Antonio Lopez in meetings with the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB).

The DOH would also ensure that the head of drug testing centers were physicians, as 20 percent of accredited centers did not employ doctors as head. The personnel complement in 5 percent of the centers monitored by the DOH were also deficient.

"If we consider space requirements alone, more than 30 percent of all drug testing centers in the country will be weeded out," Reyes said at the Annabel's health forum in Quezon City.

Around 35 percent did not meet the 20-square-meter floor area requirement for screening centers. Confirmatory testing centers should have a larger space of 60 square meters.

No permits

It was also found that 70 percent of the centers did not have the necessary permits to operate from local governments.

Reyes said the DDB should have been the only one authorized to accredit testing centers but other agencies, like the LTO and PNP, have issued accreditations as well over the years. He said the LTO and PNP must have tried their best but could not monitor everything due to the magnitude of the problem.

The DOH has the technical expertise and manpower to keep an eye on the drug testing centers, especially those outside Metro Manila, according to Reyes.

He said the DOH would work to reduce the cost of drug testing from P350 to around P200, and to have free confirmatory testing.

The health department has been consulting the owners and operators of drug testing centers since last year for the guidelines on standards for the screening and confirmatory centers.

The government is drafting the guidelines for the mandatory drug testing in the country, which was reported to have 3.4 million to 9 million drug users.

If approved, proposals to require students and politicians to submit to drug tests would be a boon to the drug testing industry.

Rehab centers

The government would need P1.6 billion to build rehabilitation centers for those who would be found positive for drug use, the DOH said.

The DOH has proposed a P1.6-billion funding for drug rehabilitation for this year's budget but Congress disapproved it due to lack of funds, according to Reyes.

Reyes said the proposed budget was for the establishment of treatment facilities for drug users in compliance with the provisions of RA 9165.

"We're trying to get a chunk from the P1 billion from the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, but this is concentrating on supply reduction."

He said that the DOH was supposed to put up one rehabilitation center per province for all 78 provinces, but he said that this was "not necessary" because the need for treatment facilities was different in various provinces.

The DOH estimated that the P1.6 billion could sustain the operations of 16 regional drug rehabilitation centers that can accommodate 1,000 drug users for a year.

"There should be more, according to the law, but it's not cost-effective because drug addiction is endemic to urban areas," Reyes said at a recent Annabel's health forum in Quezon City.

There are 66 accredited drug rehabilitation centers nationwide, but only eight were government-operated, including the largest facility in Camp Bagong Diwa in Bicutan.

Malaysians not gullible, says envoy

From page A1

why Malaysians failed miserably in altruism tests conducted in cities around the world by researchers from the California State University.

"We are not gullible enough to fall for foreigners who pretend to need help. We are not gullible," Taufik told reporters after a meeting of the diplomatic corps with Foreign Secretary Blas Ople at the Department of Foreign Affairs.

The researchers, led by Dr. Robert Levine, conducted three tests in major cities to find out which environments best encouraged altruism and which cities had people most willing to assist others. The tests were: feigning to be blind, pretending to have an injured leg and accidentally dropping a pen. The researchers then took note how many people stopped to help.

Results showed that Kuala Lumpur, New York and Singapore were the least friendly cities in the world.

Taufik said he felt bad after reading in yesterday's papers about the findings of the six-year research.

"I read that and I was quite upset this morning," Taufik said.

But while the ambassador maintained that Malaysians were actually friendly but were not gullible, he would not say that residents of cities found most friendly were gullible.

"I would not say that," Taufik said.

"I am saying that our people are not stupid to fall for foreigners pretending to need help. Why should American students come in and be blind in Malaysia?" Taufik said.

According to the study, Kuala Lumpur was an exception to the generalization that cities with less disposable income experience a slower pace of life and have cultures that value social harmony.

"Pedestrians in the fast-paced cities of Copenhagen and Vienna were very kind to strangers, whereas their counterparts in slower-paced Kuala Lumpur were not helpful at all," said Levine in his article in the June edition of the American Scientist Magazine.

Drug tests for all candidates

THE COMMISSION on Elections is in a dilemma on how to handle the law which provides for mandatory drug testing for all candidates.

The law goes against the Constitution and raises numerous questions on how it should be implemented, according to Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos.

"In effect, it amends the qualifications of candidates, national and local. As far as the local (candidates) are concerned, it could be amended as it could be provided for by law. But the qualifications of a national candidate—President, Vice President and senators—these are provided for by the Constitution," Abalos said at a press conference.

Republic Act No. 9165 says that all candidates for public office, whether appointed or elected, both in the national or local government, shall undergo a mandatory drug test.

Abalos said the Comelec would still have to determine whether the use of drugs could be a reason for disqualifying a candidate.

If RA 9165 is used, a person arrested and found positive for drug use, after a confirmatory test, can be meted out a minimum six months of rehabilitation, less than the one-year imprisonment provision of the local government code.

But another law says that a user should first be arrested before he can be disqualified, according to Abalos.

"This (local government code) does not apply to those who voluntarily submit themselves to testing. There is no penalty," Abalos said.

He said the issue was being reviewed by the Comelec's legal department. He expects the poll body to come up with a resolution in two to three weeks. "We'll make a resolution and let somebody else question it. I want this to trigger discussion," he said.

A few hours after the press conference, lawyer Romulo Makalintal said mandatory drug testing for candidates was unconstitutional.

For local officials, unless the Local Government Code is amended, the testing requirement is unlawful, Makalintal said.

"The proper procedure is to file cases against those who are involved in illegal drugs ... Once convicted, a petition for disqualification to be candidate ... could be filed, " he said in a statement.

Some 85,000 people are expected to file certificates for candidacies for the coming 2004 elections. A total of 17,021 posts are up for grabs.

Gov't, MILF sign agreement to resume peace talks

From page A1

and stressed that the informal talks in Malaysia were not aimed at forging any accord.

"It was a successful meeting," Kabalu said, referring to the informal talks in Malaysia. "Our hope now is that the agreement can be translated into action. Our people have suffered enough. We want peace and prosperity."

Kabalu said Malaysia, which had been hosting exploratory and informal talks between the two sides, had pressed the MILF to exercise patience and restraint in launching offensives.

"We will abide by the request. We will ensure our fighters are disciplined. We will not strike unless to defend ourselves," he said.

Asked about the significance of the meeting in Malaysia, Kabalu said: "It sets the stage for the resumption of peace talks with Manila."

"We are just waiting for the government to declare a suspension of military action. After their declaration, then we will push for the scheduling of the formal peace talks," he said.

The government said Tuesday it was close to resuming peace negotiations with the MILF to end its 25-year rebellion for an independent Islamic state in Mindanao.

This was after MILF chair Salamat Hashim categorically renounced terrorism, fulfilling one of several conditions set by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Kabalu said Salamat's statement had been incorporated into the document that was signed in Malaysia.

In Malacañang, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye reiterated Wednesday that peace talks would only start once Salamat came out of hiding and sat on the negotiating table.

The MILF on Tuesday released a statement saying Salamat was "ready to lead the negotiations," but Bunye said government peace negotiators were still awaiting an "official reply on the matter."

Bunye said any agreement with the MILF should be a "comprehensive settlement—political, economic, social."

"These peace talks should result in a complete package," he said.

Ceasefire monitors

Even so, Bunye said President Macapagal-Arroyo had asked Malaysia to send a "ceasefire observer team" to the Phili[illegible] preparation for the resumption of formal peace talks with the MILF.

"We are interested in the creation of a ceasefire observer team," Bunye said over government radio.

"And this has been formally relayed by Foreign Secretary Blas Ople to his counterpart in Malaysia," he said.

The peace monitoring team envisioned by Ople would be chaired by Malaysia with Bangladesh, Bahrain and Libya as members.

Ople on Wednesday met with ambassadors from countries belonging to the influential Organization of the Islamic Conference that would be individually invited to "contribute to the peace and development" in Mindanao.

Ople said the OIC, which brokered a peace pact between Manila and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in 1996, was "very happy" with its implementation. The MILF, which splintered from the MNLF in 1978, was left out of the deal.

Ms Macapagal has blamed the MILF for a spate of bombings and attacks that have left about 100 dead in Central Mindanao since March.

Police and military officials have [illegible] th[illegible] MILF [illegible] the Jem[illegible]h Islar [illegible] gional Islamic group [illegible] Bali attack that left more than 200 people dead in Indonesia last year.

On Wednesday, the chief of the military's Southern Command said troops had overrun an MILF base in Barangay Payan, Kabuntalan, Maguindanao, and discovered bomb-making materials, including three sacks of gunpowder, blasting caps and pipes.

Arsenal

Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko said soldiers of the 6th Infantry Division also recovered a grinding machine, a welding machine, seven pieces of dynamo, an electrical capacitor, and 20 containers and two sacks filled with spare parts for rocket-propelled grenades.

"More (bomb materials) were uncovered in seven abandoned bunkers in the same place an hour after," Kyamko said.

On Tuesday afternoon, Kyamko said soldiers of the 64th Infantry Battalion had also recovered two land mines in Barangay Tugaig, Barira, Maguindanao.

"It's our suspicion that the MILF, while establishing truce, (was) also building (its) arsenals," Kyamko said in Zamboanga City. *Reports by Julie S. Alipala and Joselle R. B[illegible]illa, PDI Mi[illegible] P[illegible] Norman Bordadora in Manila; AFP and AP*

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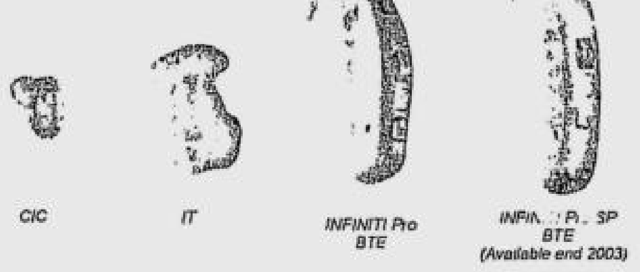

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GMA transition president

From page A1

According to Gonzales' scenario, Ms Macapagal can seek election in 2004 if the Constitution is amended before the May polls.

Malacañang and its allies led by Speaker Jose de Venecia are stepping up the campaign to achieve just that. They are also pushing for a shift to a parliamentary system of government.

"If the President said before that she's not interested in 2004, then that's sufficient indication that she's willing to forego a full six-year term if she is reelected," Gonzales said yesterday.

Gonzales, who was due to return to Manila last night, acknowledged that he was among those trying to "convince" Ms Macapagal to reconsider her Dec. 30 announcement that she would not run in 2004.

"In the first place, GMA is the only winnable candidate in the administration. Second, she is not averse to constitutional change," he said.

But the President will step down midterm in 2007 instead of 2010, he added.

2 scenarios

Gonzales said yesterday that Charter-change campaigners in the administration were looking at two scenarios: to amend the Constitution before the 2004 elections or, "if time is not on our side, to have it in 2007 with GMA as transition president."

He disputed claims that they were out to scrap the 2004 elections and extend the terms of elective officials. (*See story on Page A1.)*

"There are a lot of misconceptions about Charter change," he lamented.

He said he and his Partido Demokratiko Sosyalista ng Pilipinas would support senatorial candidates who would also be willing to step down in 2007 to make way for constitutional reforms.

"We will back candidates who can also make the sacrifice," he said.

Administration stalwarts are also apparently mulling the idea of lifting term limits on the President, who is currently barred by the Constitution from seeking reelection.

Gonzales said Friday that even if Charter change did not push through this year, Ms Macapagal should run "because she has not finished her work, including amending the Constitution."

He admitted, however, that the President had so far not indicated that she was thinking of running.

But in Pangasinan, Binalonan Mayor Ramon Guico, president of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines and a cousin of Ms Macapagal's, said she might decide to run with sufficient "pushing."

Guico said his cousin "is refusing to comment right now and is focused on economic programs because if she will declare [her intention to run] now, she will be severely criticized."

Strong president

The idea emerging so far in the administration is to maintain a "strong president" even under a parliamentary system.

Normally, under the parliamentary system the president is just a ceremonial leader and the prime minister is the head of government.

On Tuesday, former University of the Philippines president Jose Abueva raised concern about the administration's campaign for constitutional amendments.

Himself an advocate of Charter change, Abueva said the plan to maintain a strong president under a parliamentary system would defeat political reforms. He also said that merely focusing on a parliamentary shift would not bring about needed reforms.

But Abueva stressed that he was not an adversary of the administration. In fact, he said, he was continuing to closely work with Gonzales and De Venecia to amend the Constitution.

Honest differences

"We have honest differences of opinion, but we are collaborating," he said. "They are open-minded about Charter change."

Abueva's group, the Citizens Movement for a Federal Philippines, is campaigning for a parliamentary and federal system.

Under the proposal, the country will be divided into 11 states and the president will be elected by members of the parliament and state assemblies.

Abueva said a federal system would free the country from the colonial setup where power was concentrated at the top.

"We have to create power in the region," he said.

He expressed the belief that the new Constitution should take effect in 2010 to give the public more time to discuss it.

Presidential qualities

Leading business groups led by the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) are drafting a selection guide listing the qualities of the best presidential candidate.

"We in the business community have agreed to remain apolitical and refrain from endorsing who the next president should be," said MAP president Edward L. Fereira. "We leave it up to the voters to make that choice. Our goal is to help them vote based on qualities, and not personalities."

From initial discussions, Fereira said the MAP identified at least four qualities that the next president should have: competency (in economic and political matters), credibility, transparency (in motives and goals), and leadership.

He said the selection criteria should be ready by July or August, to give the electorate substantial lead time to ponder their choice for 2004.

Fereira said the other business groups that agreed to contribute to the list were the Makati Business Club and Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines. Members of the academe are pitching in as well, he said.

Fereira said other business groups, such as the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce Inc., were also drafting their own list, which he said would be merged with the MAP-led draft. *With reports from Gil Cabacungan Jr. in Manila; Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Joker raps Palace . . .

From page A1

study group to work for the amendments to the Constitution."

However, he said, "the picture as it stands now is that the majority of the senators will not agree because it will be self-serving and an embarrassment for them to work for the extension of their terms without elections."

In a statement, the President said "Charter change is not in our immediate realm of priorities, although we acknowledge that our national future can be better secured through certain amendments to the fundamental law."

The statement was issued amid renewed talk that the amendments being pursued by the President's allies in the House of Representatives were aimed at bringing about an extension of her assumed term, which ends in June next year.

Ms Macapagal said she was leaving the debate to Congress while the executive branch "concentrates on the most pressing and vital problems of the nation."

"At the moment, the presidency is not engaged in this issue," she said.

Hernani Braganza, Ms Macapagal's new adviser on political affairs, said the President wanted the movement for Charter change to "take its natural course" in Congress and was keeping her hands off it.

Neutral

Speaker Jose de Venecia also said Ms Macapagal remained neutral on the issue of constitutional amendments, particularly the proposed shift in the system of government from presidential to parliamentary.

De Venecia said the Senate and the House had a "non-negotiable agreement" that there would be no term extension for any elected official beyond 2004, and that next year's elections would proceed as scheduled.

Ms Macapagal's open stance to Charter change has encouraged her partymates in the House to push for amendments, principally the shift to a parliamentary form of government.

Several months ago, the Lakas-led House approved by a vote of 134-13 Concurrent Resolution No. 16, which seeks to convene the two chambers of Congress into a constituent assembly to undertake the amendments. The Senate has yet to approve a similar measure at the committee level.

De Venecia, principal proponent of Charter change in the House, wants the changes in effect by next year.

No knowledge

According to Braganza, Ms Macapagal "does not have any knowledge of [and] has not given any authority" to a 40-member study group that will draft the proposed amendments of the 1987 Constitution, as earlier claimed by her own adviser on special concerns, Norberto Gonzales.

Braganza said the President would call on De Venecia and Gonzales to give "a more detailed briefing" on the efforts to amend the Constitution, "if only to give the people a more transparent view of the issues at hand and avoid any misinterpretation that could impute ill motive to the effort."

"[She] may also caution them to keep her out of such political issues because these are not part of her priorities for the country right now. There are far more urgent issues that she needs to address at this time," Braganza said.

Transition gov't

But Senator Arroyo said "central" to the 40-member group's studies was "the formation of a transition government ... which is a feature of House Concurrent Resolution No. 16."

"It therefore turns out," he said, "that Malacañang and the House were working in tandem and proceeding on parallel lines for the calling of a constituent assembly that will ensure precisely a transition government run by transition officials."

By Arroyo's analysis, there will be no elections next year if the amendments are in place as early as January.

He said the incumbent elected officials would be installed through the "simple expedience" of extending their terms.

"For how long? Nobody knows. But the incumbent President, Vice President, senators, congressmen and mayors, etc. would be transitional officials until the new officials under the new Constitution and the parliamentary government are elected," he said.

Killing the initiative

But De Venecia said term extension would "kill the [Charter-change] initiative and alienate our people."

He said Congress leaders pushing constitutional amendments had signed a covenant with civil society leaders to reject term extension and hold the 2004 elections as scheduled.

De Venecia decried the "stream of black propaganda" supposedly being employed by opponents of Charter change. "These attacks are designed to torpedo and denigrate this initiative," he said.

Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez said the issue of term extension was never brought up in the meetings between the Senate committee on constitutional amendments and its counterpart in the House.

"Anybody who injects this kind of speculation [into the issue] is just attempting to mislead the public. Or he is ignorant of the agreements arrived at in our series of inter-chamber consultation meetings," Gonzales said.

Deputy Minority Leader Constantino Jaraula, principal author of Concurrent Resolution No. 16, said: "When we address constitutional concerns, political motives become irrelevant because of the necessity for reforms."

Jaraula also said Charter change was not a matter of convenience but "a question of survival for the republic."

The meetings between the two committees were attended by Senators Edgardo Angara, Aquilino Pimentel, Vicente Sotto III, Robert Barbers and John Osmeña, and Representatives Antonio Nachura, Gerry Espina and Gonzalez.

Why they kept senator's cancer secret

From page A1

exactly what would happen," Lino, 25, the youngest of the Cayetano children, told the INQUIRER. "It was a privilege for a son who adored his father."

Lino's elder brother Rene Carl (Ren-Ren), a Muntinlupa councilor, said one of the reasons the family kept his father's cancer a secret among household members and immediate relatives was the apprehension that the public might wrongly perceive the cancer was an offshoot of the liver transplant.

"We didn't want to put the spotlight off the successful liver transplant for it is really a safe procedure. We didn't want other people with liver problems to lose hope," he said.

Another reason, Ren-Ren said, was that the family really hoped that the cancer-stricken Cayetano would "still fight it out, after all he had gone through."

Cayetano, 68, died Tuesday afternoon of intra-abdominal cancer, which his doctors in the US discovered three months after his liver transplant. Only upon the lawmaker's death did his family made his second and terminal affliction public.

Added mission

The family intends to use Cayetano's charity foundation which he set up in the 1980s to promote organ donation in the country, Ren-Ren told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Ren-Ren said the Cayetano Foundation Inc., which grants scholarships, will take on an added mission to memorialize the senator's "successful" liver transplant in the United States last Feb. 5. Ren-Ren said the Cayetano Foundation had been mostly engaged in granting scholarships since it was established by his father when he entered politics as an assemblyman in the Marcos years.

In view of his father's experience as a liver recipient, he said the foundation would also start to focus on organ donations, perhaps starting with an information campaign, he said.

"We hope to not only encourage organ donations or help patients seek out donors, but maybe even help local hospitals acquire the necessary equipment for organ transplants," he stressed.

According to another grieving son, Taguig-Pateros Rep. Allan Peter Cayetano, his father wanted his family not to dwell much on his "No. 2" (the cancer) problem but instead help him spread God's "message."

Allan was referring to the elder Cayetano's spiritual experiences and insights which he had shared in several media interviews after arriving from the United States last June 5.

"In the three weeks since he got home, we believe he was able to share God's message of love and hope through media interviews, conversations with friends who visited him," said Lino.

Lino said "it's up to us (the surviving family) to further that message."

The family has tentatively set the senator's burial this Sunday, June 29, at the Garden of Memories Memorial Park in Pateros, hometown of the elder Cayetano's mother.

Cayetano's remains will be brought to the Senate on Friday afternoon for a necrological service.

Last days

Recalling the last few days of his father, Ren-Ren said the senator gathered his three brothers to a "meeting" last Sunday night (their lone sister being currently abroad) and proposed that they all have dinner together every Monday hence.

"One of my uncles would later tell me that perhaps it was dad's way of saying goodbye," Ren-Ren said. In the meeting, he said, his father, who is the eldest in the brood, asked his brothers to "take good care of the Cayetano name."

Relatives and friends, including the senator's peers in politics and legal circles, began trickling in to view Cayetano's remains at the family lanai, the same area in the house where he passed away in his favorite cushioned armchair at 3:54 p.m. on Tuesday.

Among the earliest to arrive were Sen. Noli de Castro and civil society leader Pastor "Boy" Saycon of the Council on Philippine Affairs.

Saycon said he best remembered Cayetano for the role he played during the impeachment trial of then President Joseph Estrada, when anti-Estrada groups like Copa counted the lawmaker as a major ally in Congress.

He said Cayetano, who was then closely associated with Marcos' Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile was one of the "rare politicians" who could easily "cross over" and still be welcomed by the street parliamentarians demanding the resignation of Marcos.

Cayetano, Saycon also said, has always served as a "stabilizing presence" within the ruling Lakas party especially whenever party mates tended to be confrontational over certain issues.

"It's sad that the best seems to be the first to be called (by God)," he told the INQUIRER.

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Drilon: We still have the numbers

From page A1

tion and energy. He is calling a caucus next week to fill up the vacancies.

But he strongly belied reports that Cayetano's death would trigger a Senate coup.

"No. We still have the numbers—12 as against 10 in the minority," said Drilon.

He explained that as Senate President, he was supported by majority of the present 22-member chamber.

"As I said before, the powers of the Senate presidency rest in the hands of my colleagues in the Senate. Whoever has 13 votes will become the president," he said.

"Right now, I'm confident that I have the support of the majority," said Drilon, referring to his 11 colleagues in the majority bloc.

Majority/minority blocs

Besides Drilon, the majority is composed of Senators. Juan Flavier, Loren Legarda, Francis Pangilinan, Joker Arroyo, Manny Villar, Robert Jaworski, Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Robert Barbers, Ralph Recto, Ramon Revilla Sr. and Noli de Castro.

The minority is composed of Sens. Edgardo Angara, Vicente Sotto III, Tessie Aquino-Oreta, Luisa Ejercito-Estrada, Gringo Honasan, Panfilo Lacson, Aquilino Pimentel, Sergio Osmeña III, John Osmeña and Rodolfo Biazon.

Precarious

But a majority rule which hinges on merely two votes is a precarious situation, said an opposition senator who asked not to be named.

Also, rumors that at least two administration senators were being courted by the minority bloc had circulated even before the Senate adjourned sine die on June 6.

The minority bloc used to have 11 members prior to the decision of then Sen. Blas Ople to accept the foreign affairs portfolio.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, an administration senator disclosed that the real issue behind the refusal of President Macapagal-Arroyo to appoint Barbers as anti-drug czar was preempt a power struggle in the Senate.

Numbers game

"It's not about the unconstitutionality of allowing Barbers to hold dual positions. The real issue is the numbers game," said the senator.

The senator pointed out that the President had considered Cayetano's state of health in determining Barbers' fate.

"There was no assurance that Cayetano would be able to recuperate in time for the July 28 resumption of the Senate session," the senator said.

The senator said that Malacañang had been informed that Cayetano's family had decided to bring him back to the country because the senator's health was in grave peril.

"So, ergo, if the President would allow Barbers to resign as senator while Cayetano was still recuperating, the majority would be down to 11. That could spell doom for the ruling bloc since the minority needed only one senator to wrest control of the Senate."

In a press conference last Monday, Drilon said Barber could be more effective as a senator. He said Barbers could just exercise his functions as the chair of the joint congressional committee on drugs and exercise oversight functions over the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA).

Administration Sen. Joker Arroyo, however, cautioned his colleagues against pushing for any reorganization in the chamber.

He said it was inappropriate to talk politics when Cayetano "has not even been laid to rest."

"Let's not quarrel like children. Rene has not been laid to rest. Besides nothing can happen until a month from now," said Arroyo.

Mourning Cayetano

But even the 10-member minority bloc has denied insinuation that it was "agitating" for a reorganization in the chamber.

Sotto said in a statement that senators should refrain "from speculating on the political repercussions on the Senate leadership" of Cayetano's demise.

"While we mourn the passing of Senator Cayetano, we, from the minority bloc, denounce all reports about moves in gaining the Senate majority, and we appeal to all to give the Senate a break and cease efforts to further smear the minority especially since no one in the opposition has ever raised the issue at this time."

Biazon echoed the same sentiment, saying: "This is not the time to bring in politics into this sacrilegious event."

'Tiangge' operators hit tax plan

PRIVILEGE-STORE operators or *tianggeros* are urging President Macapagal-Arroyo to stop the implementation of a new tax scheme that could seriously hurt the *tiangge* industry and adversely affect thousands who depend on that enterprise.

Taking up the cudgels for the *tianggeros*, the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP) is calling on Ms Macapagal-Arroyo to take "administrative action" against Revenue Regulation 16-2003.

Once implemented, RR 16-2003 issued by the Department of Finance will require the operators of small and medium enterprises to pay in advance P4,500 in percentage tax and P1,500 in income tax.

The *tianggeros* are branding RR 16-2003 as "unjust, anti-poor and untimely."

They said it would deter the growth of the small and medium enterprises (SMEs), especially in the rural areas.

Through its Commission on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, the AMRSP said the implemention of RR 16-2003 would result in the shutting down of small businesses and retrenchment, aggravating the unemployment problem in the country.

Heavy toll

Advance payment of Percentage Tax and Income Tax will definitely cast a heavy toll on this group of small entrepreneurs, the AMRSP said.

AMRSP is not asking the President to exempt *tianggeros* from paying the taxes due them but only that these be paid when actual income and profit have been accounted for.

On the other hand, Greenhills Shopping Center *tiangge* operators are requesting the repeal of RR 16-2003.

It said *tiangge* operators are small entrepreneurs with limited capital. Some tianggeros used to be employed but lost out jobs due to the poor economy .

According to the association, the *tiangge* business is no longer as profitable since there are fewer customers due to the economic crisis.

Thousands of *tianggeros* from Metro Manila and the provinces will hold a rally on June 27 at the Department of Finance in Pasay City to air their opposition to the revenue scheme.

SOME of the 60 alleged drug offenders arrested following the renewed drive against the sale and use of illegal substances hide their faces during a presentation to media yesterday by the National Capital Region Police Office in Quezon City.

JOAN BONDOC

Renewed anti-drug drive nets 175 in Metro Manila

THE DIRECTIVE of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for a renewed campaign against illegal drugs has netted 175 drug suspects in Metro Manila over the past two days.

Yesterday, Manila Mayor Joselito Atienza Jr. presented to media a total of 104 drug offenders arrested in Quiapo, Hermosa and Sampaloc. These included 78 alleged drug users and 26 pushers.

They were apprehended by the Western Police District Drug Enforcement Group.

Apart from the arrests, 714.95 grams of methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu worth P1.43 million were confiscated during the drive, according to WPD Director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong.

"We don't need a shame campaign to achieve successful results," Bulaong added, referring to the spray-painting campaign which newly appointed presidential adviser on illegal drugs Alfredo Lim wanted to revive.

Atienza agreed.

"This is only the initial catch, we're expecting more arrests in the coming days," he said.

The mayor stressed that the arrest of the drug offenders was a result of the collaboration between the city's police force and barangay officials.

The mayor met with the barangay officials two days ago to mobilize them for the anti-drug campaign.

The role of barangay officials in the campaign against illegal substances was also shown in Navotas where officials of Barangay Daanghari arrested four suspects, said Northern Police District Deputy Chief for Operations Genesis Tolejano.

Other arrests included 67 in Quezon City, four in Caloocan and three in Malabon.

This developed as a Manila court sentenced a Taiwanese to life imprisonment for selling illegal drugs.

Judge Ramon Makasiar of the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 35 also ordered Hsieh Tine Chang to pay P5 million plus the costs of the trial.

Hsieh was arrested on Nov. 9, 2001 for selling 455.8 grams of shabu to a narcotics agent.

Meanwhile, Local Government Secretary Jose Lina ordered the prosecution of Pasig Regional Trial Court Branch 64 Judge Leoncio Janolo Jr. for allowing a suspected Korean drug dealer to post bail even after being caught selling one kilo of shabu.

Lina told the INQUIRER that President Arroyo herself ordered the filing of an administrative case against Janolo. *Margaux Ortiz, Tarra Quismundo, Alcuin Papa and Nelson Flores*

P9-M worth of shabu seized in QC

AT LEAST 4.6 kilos of shabu worth around P9 million were seized during an illegal drug clearing operation in Batasan, Quezon City, yesterday, according to Interior and Local Government Secretary Jose Lina Jr.

The illegal substance, along with a gram of cocaine and at least 250 tablets of Ecstasy, were seized from 67 suspected drug pushers operating in the barangay and in peripheral areas, Lina said.

Deputy Director Gen. Edgar Aglipay, chief of the Philippine National Police anti-drug task force, confirmed the haul and said the alleged peddlers would be charged with drug pushing.

The seizure of the banned substances was the highlight of yesterday's launching of the barangay clearing operation, said Aglipay. *Christian V. Esguerra*

Search on for Abu members

MEMBERS of the Western Police District are combing the city in search of other possible members of the bandit group Abu Sayyaf.

WPD director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong yesterday said the search followed the arrest on Monday of Samir Hakim, alleged ranking leader of the Abu Sayyaf.

Bulaong said they were coordinating with the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP) in launching the search.

He said like Hakim, other Abu Sayyaf men might have taken jobs in the city as cover for their activities. *Margaux Ortiz*

Fred Lim off to a bad start

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THERE IS no doubt the "Four Aces"—Sen. Robert Barbers, former Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, ex-Manila police Capt. Rey Jaylo and ex-Maj. Lucio Margallo—will greatly contribute to minimizing the drug menace.

But they need the help of the citizenry. Without the people's help, the drug problem will not be eliminated.

As things go now, complete success against the government's renewed war on drugs is *malabo* (dim) because of an apathetic public.

* * *

Some people have expressed misgivings that Fred Lim might use his position as presidential adviser on illegal drugs to harass his personal and political enemies.

***Pareng* Fred, please don't get offended, but I heard that this early, you're already planning to go after Kim Wong, who's suspected to be a drug lord.**

Whether it's true or not Kim Wong is a drug lord, you should not go after him because he's your personal and political enemy.

* * *

A law enforcer should not be biased toward anybody, not even toward his enemies.

He's there to carry out the letter of the law, not to satisfy his craving for revenge.

If you go after Kim Wong, Pareng Fred, many people will think you're just waging a personal vendetta.

* * *

It's public knowledge that you hate Wong who used to be your personal friend and benefactor.

But then, you and the young multi-millionaire parted ways because he supported Lito Atienza who was your rival for the Manila mayoralty post, instead of you.

Atienza won and that made matters worse for you and Kim Wong.

* * *

So far, no evidence has been presented linking Kim Wong to the illegal drugs trade. Everything said about him is hearsay.

I would have been the first to denounce Kim Wong if I knew that he was involved in drugs. So would other like-minded souls such as Hermogenes "Jun" Ebdane, Philippine National Police chief; Director Avelino "Sonny " Razon, former chief of the Western Police District; Manila Mayor Lito Atienza; and former Solicitor General Frank Chavez. They are all Wong's friends.

Chavez, who is Wong's lawyer, told me that if he later learned that his client was involved in drugs, he would drop him like a hot potato.

* * *

I may be offending my good friend and mistah, Brig. Gen. Victor Corpus, military intelligence chief, but everything said about Wong are not "A-1" or confirmed reports.

I can't blame Vic Corpus, though, for accusing Wong of drug trafficking. The information about Wong has been passed on to him by his predecessors at ISAFP or by other intelligence agencies.

But other intelligence agencies could sometimes be inaccurate in their information gathering. So, the wrong information could have been passed on to other intelligence units, and so forth.

* * *

I know Kim Wong's racket. He's an influence peddler.

Don't ask me what kind of influence peddling he's into because I would be violating his confidence. In the United States, his work is considered lobbying.

Let's just say that what he's doing may be a bit immoral, but it's not illegal because he's not violating any law of the land.

Perhaps because of his "lobbying" work, he's stepped on many toes.

* * *

Sometimes, the executive branch's campaign against graft and corruption is blocked by the judiciary.

The judicial branch doesn't care whether its intervention in some cases might result in delaying the housecleaning within the executive branch.

A case in point is the Court of Appeals' order to the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) to stop its investigation into the lifestyle of a director of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).

* * *

The concerned BIR official could not explain to the PAGC how he could have bought two late-model luxury cars on a salary of P30,000 a month.

Clearly, the BIR official is corrupt because the value of the two vehicles—P3 million—is disproportionate to his salary and allowances.

So, in order to get the PAGC off his back, this corrupt official sought the help of the appellate court.

Is it naive to think that the corrupt official may have some friends at the Court of Appeals?

* * *

Sen. Panfilo Lacson has called for the abolition of the pork barrel system among congressmen and senators.

But he's been found to have used up P147 million of his pork barrel last year. This is P3 million short of his P150-million allocation.

In contrast, Senators Joker Arroyo and Sergio Osmeña III, who never spent a single centavo of their respective allocations, have not called for the abolition of the pork barrel.

***Hirap sa inyo, naniniwala pa kayo kay* Ping Lacson! (I don't know why you still believe in Ping Lacson!) The guy doesn't have palabra de honor (word of honor).**

2 kidnap suspects die in shootout

By Christian V. Esguerra

POLICE killed two suspected kidnappers and arrested seven other suspects in separate operations in Antipolo and Cavite beginning Tuesday night.

The two unidentified men were killed during a shootout with Antipolo police and members of the Police Anti-Crime Emergency Response team around 2 a.m. yesterday.

They were part of the group that abducted Filipino-Chinese businessman Franklin Ongsitco at his construction supply store in Barangay Dalig, Antipolo City, Monday night, police said.

Ongsitco was released the following day after reportedly paying P150,000 in ransom.

Police recovered part of the ransom after a 15-minute shootout with the suspects along the winding Sumulong highway.

Found inside the suspects' owner-type jeep were P43,000 in cash, two revolvers, a hand grenade, bullets, and Ongsitco's wallet containing his ATM cards and driver's license.

A few hours before the Antipolo shootout, Cavite police arrested seven alleged members of a big-time kidnap-for-ransom gang operating in Region 4.

The suspects were identified as Benito Simbahan, 49, alleged group leader with a P500,000 price tag, and members Romerico Geronimo, 30, Albert Apisial, 21, Fernando Detito, 21, Rommel Nueva, 19, Ruben Gatdula, 22, and Alex Elicano, 20.

They were linked to drug pushers in Batangas, Cavite, and Pangasinan and were blamed for the killing of two people, including a police officer.

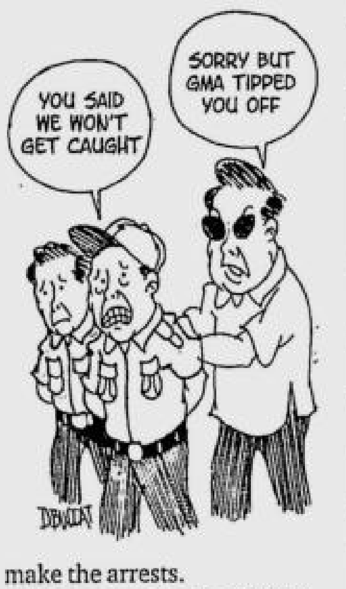
The suspects were arrested on their way to their safehouse in Windward Hills in Dasmariñas.

Police found in Simbahan's house three M-16 rifles, a submachine gun, a caliber 22 pistol, hand grenade, live ammunition, and a still undetermined amount of shabu and drug paraphernalia.

The group also yielded a Toyota Revo van (VBZ-766), Toyota Corolla (DAW-707), Honda Accord (UKZ-402), and a Honda motorcycle (NR 2851).

6 'kotong' traffic men tipped off by GMA herself

By Alcuin Papa



SORRY BUT GMA TIPPED YOU OFF
YOU SAID WE WON'T GET CAUGHT
DIBAKAT

BASED on a tip from President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo herself, operatives of the National Capital Region Police Office arrested yesterday six traffic enforcers who were mulcting money from motorists in Quezon City.

NCRPO chief Deputy Director Gen. Reynaldo Velasco identified the six as Jose Angeles, Romy Soriano, Richard Dismanay, Elpidio Palmones, Ismael Gaspar and Ellezer Bolanbao, all traffic enforcers of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority.

The six were arrested at the corner of Roads 1 and 13, and Mindanao Avenue near the SM North Edsa by the NCRPO's Regional Intelligence Services and Operations Office (Risoo).

According to NCRPO spokesperson Supt. Cesar Binag, the President called up Velasco late Tuesday night and said she had received complaints from motorists in the area on the mulcting activities of the suspects.

Immediately, Velasco sent out Risoo operatives led by its chief Sr. Supt. Miguel Laurel to make the arrests.

Velasco urged the public to report to them such activities by policemen and traffic enforcers.

The NCRPO has been meeting with representatives of transport groups on instructions of the President to protect motorists from mulcting lawmen, Velasco said.

Velasco said they would file charges against the six traffic enforcers and would recommend their dismissal to the MMDA.

LATE SPORTS

Phone Pals a win shy of finals

THE BIG boys of Talk N Text took over the game in the homestretch, giving the Phone Pals a resounding 87-74 victory and a 2-1 edge over the Alaska Aces last night in the semifinals of the Samsung-PBA All Filipino Cup at the Philsports Arena.

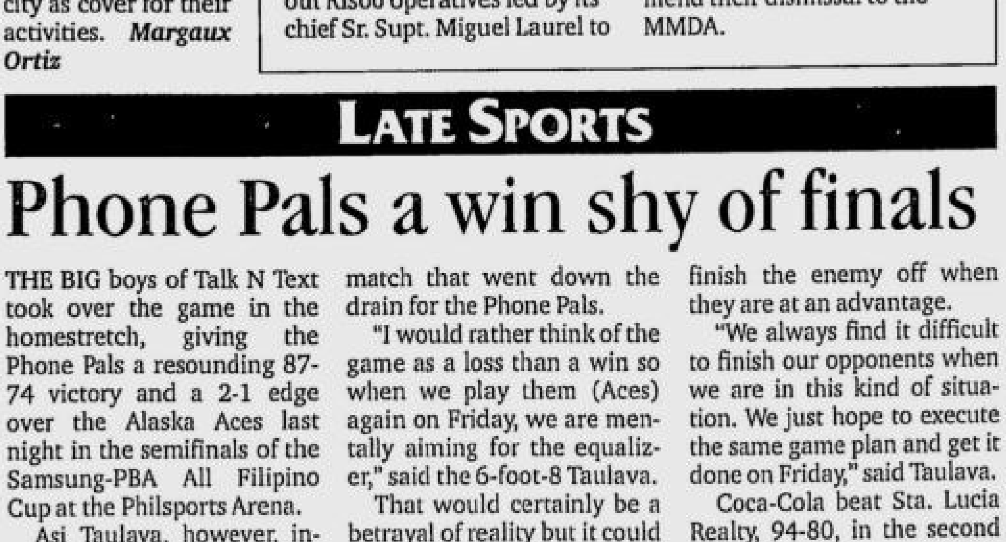
Asi Taulava, however, intends to reverse the situation and think about the win as a match that went down the drain for the Phone Pals.

"I would rather think of the game as a loss than a win so when we play them (Aces) again on Friday, we are mentally aiming for the equalizer," said the 6-foot-8 Taulava.

That would certainly be a betrayal of reality but it could very well suit the Phone Pals who always find it hard to finish the enemy off when they are at an advantage.

"We always find it difficult to finish our opponents when we are in this kind of situation. We just hope to execute the same game plan and get it done on Friday," said Taulava.

Coca-Cola beat Sta. Lucia Realty, 94-80, in the second game to lead their own semis series, 2-1. *June Navarro*



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'Shame campaign' slammed

By Philip C. Tubeza, Tina Santos and Leila B. Salaverria

NEWLY APPOINTED presidential adviser on illegal drugs Alfredo Lim is finding himself alone after a lawyers group and Metro Manila mayors and police chiefs rejected a revival of his shame campaign against drug suspects.

"The shame campaign violated the presumption of innocence (and) transgressed due process," stressed former Sen. Rene Saguisag, chair of the lawyers group Mabini.

Saguisag added, "Lim is reviving a shameful campaign that violates a citizen's right to privacy and results in vandalism of private property."

The Mabini chair was referring to the spray painting of the words "House of pushers. Move out!" on the houses of drug suspects which Lim did in 1997 when he was still Manila mayor.

On June 26, 2000, the Court of Appeals struck down Manila Ordinance 7926 which Lim had used as basis for the spray-painting campaign.

Lim appealed to the Supreme Court but it was denied with finality in February 2001.

Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco said Lim could no longer do what he wanted since there was already a court ruling.

Malabon Mayor Amado Vicencio agreed with Tiangco.

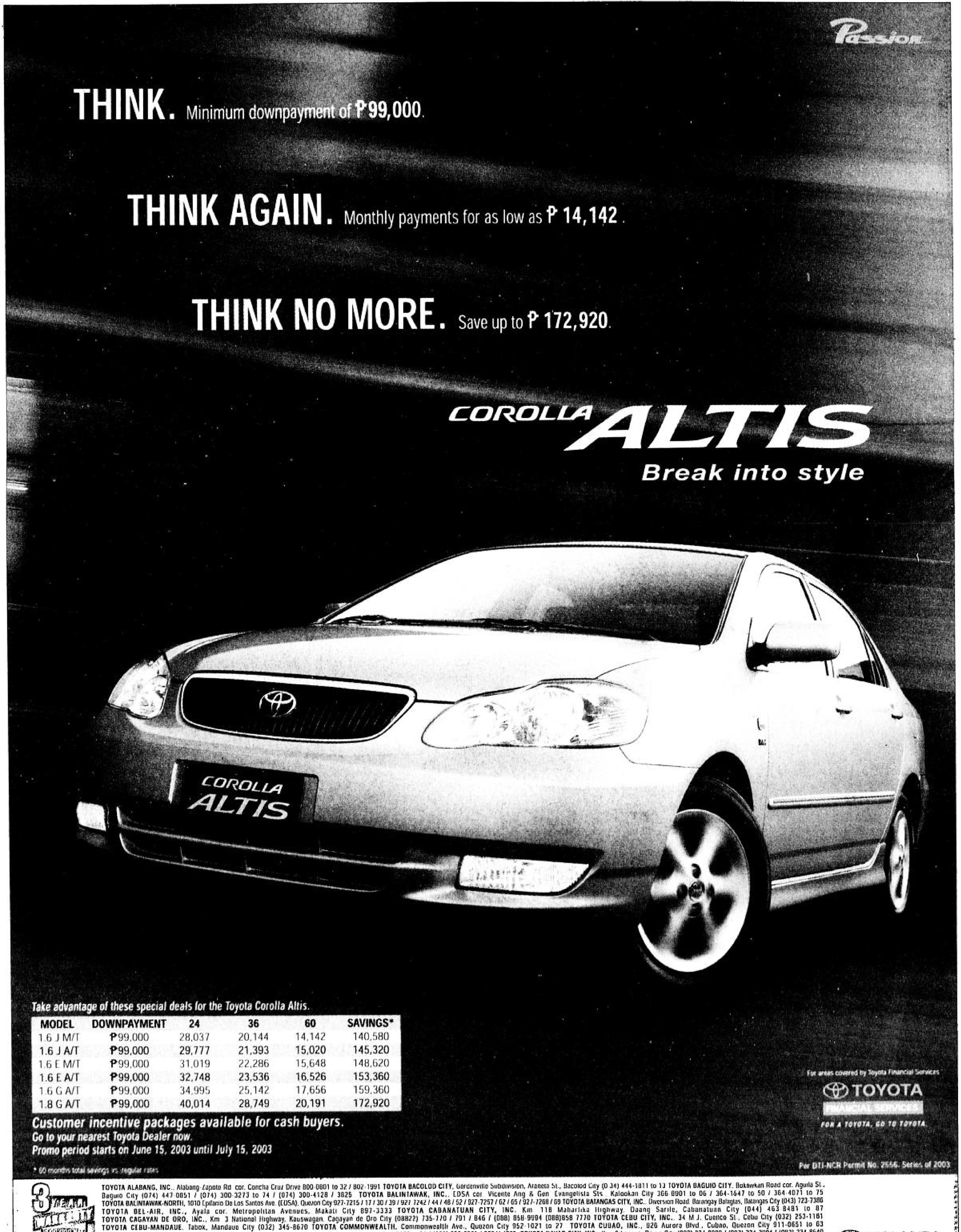
For his part, Supt. Jose Marcelo, Valenzuela police chief, said Lim's plan would be condemning drug suspects without proof.

Meanwhile, Northern Police District Office director Chief Supt. Marcelino Franco Jr. said there were other ways of solving the drug problem.

Pasay City Mayor Peewee Trinidad agreed, saying personally talking to suspected drug pushers could be more effective than shaming them in public.

In another development, Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando said he would pitch the idea of placing under quarantine the drug hot spots in the metropolis.

Fernando said he would present his proposal today to the Metro Manila Council which is made up of the 17 mayors in the National Capital Region.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SPORTS

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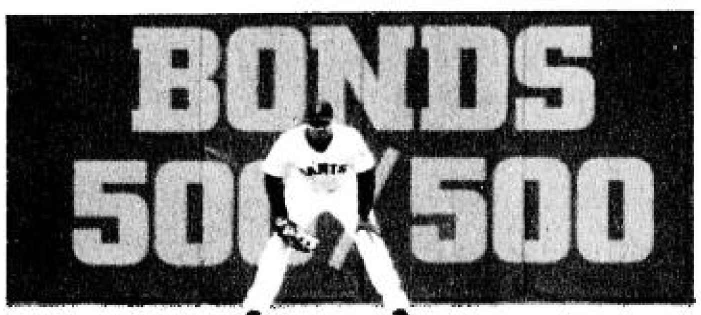
WHAT'S INSIDE



- Serena, Andre advance in Wimbledon /A18
- Bonds 1st to score '500-500' feat /A18
- 'Beckhamania' hits Vietnam /A18
- Pistons, others eye 7-foot Serb /A18
- RP chessers, Vietnamese up /A19

PSC Task Force has GMA backing

By Marc Anthony Reyes

WE ARE only following President Arroyo's orders.

This was the curt remark of Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain yesterday as he defended the creation of a separate Task Force for the Southeast Asian Games and other regional competitions, which came under heavy attack from the Philippine Olympic Committee.

Buhain said the agency is mandated to justify the release of government funds by sticking to the criteria the PSC and the POC have agreed upon and not on secondary requirements the Olympic body has put up to maximize the country's participation.

"We never said that the PSC will decide on who will go because that is a POC matter," said Buhain. "But we will definitely decide on who will be funded...we want to make sure they are worthy and (their selection) can be defended in Congress."

He added: "We would not know how many are really qualified if we are not going to look into their records ourselves."

MS ARROYO

While conceding that the POC is the only recognized body allowed to send delegations to the SEAG, Buhain emphasized that the PSC also has a role to play in the process. "From the start, they didn't include us in the selection process...They gave us observer's status but later on totally kept us out," he said.

The PSC has already approved for the Vietnam sportsfest 279 athletes, who passed the criteria of either a silver medal in the 2001 SEAG in Malaysia or a bronze in the 2002 Asian Games.

But the chair of the POC SEAG Task Force, Steve Hontiveros of bowling, said some 400 athletes have made it to the RP contingent with some NSAs still to pick their respective SEAG bets.

Athletes whose performances are not "measurable" but have the potential to win will also be recommended for inclusion to the RP roster, Hontiveros added.

The PSC chief, who has been conducting surprise visits to the athletes' training for the Vietnam games since last month, added that the POC was barking up the wrong tree in as far as holding local regional competitions is concerned.

He maintained that staging the Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao Games "is in line with the President's thrust to reach out to the people in the provinces, especially Mindanao."

Likewise, Buhain said these regional meets are part of the whole sporting program to discover new talents for the national team and help the national sports associations tap prospects for the national pool.

"Although we are mandated to look after the elite athletes, it is our obligation to keep the wheels of sports development rolling to make sure there is continuity," Buhain said.

PBA suspends random drug test for now

By June Navarro

THE PHILIPPINE Basketball Association has temporarily suspended the random drug testing of players until the qualifying for the Asian Invitationals kicks off three weeks from now.

PBA technical chief Perry Martinez, the prime mover of the league's drug-testing policy, said there will be no drug testing during the entire semifinals and championship series of the ongoing All-Filipino Cup.

League officials said the postponement would allow the four remaining teams ample room to concentrate on the games unaffected by the mental drawbacks the drug tests might bring.

``And it's also unfair that the remaining teams undergo random testing while the other squads don't," said Martinez.

He said the drug-check program of the league for the entire season is almost complete with more than 90 percent of the players already having gone through random tests and 100 percent through mandatory urine diagnosis.

Martinez said random urine testing would resume on July 18 when five teams dispute the last slot in the Asian Invitationals in a single-round robin elimination format.

Purefoods, Barangay Ginebra, Shell, Sta. Lucia Realty and Alaska will battle it out for the right to join the FedEx Express, Coca-Cola, Batang Red Bull, Talk N Text and San Miguel Beer in the Invitationals slated late next month.

The RP Men's team, which will represent the country in the Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam at the end of the year, joins three foreign teams as guest squads in the Asian Invitationals.

While foreign teams are not obliged to undergo random drug testing, Martinez said the national team would only go through urine specimen testing upon the approval of the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

So far only one foreign contingent has signed up for the Invitationals—the Yugoslavian national juniors team. An Australian team, the Adelaide 36'rs, which earlier confirmed its participation, has decided to shelve its Philippine trip for unknown reasons.

The remaining two slots for foreigners will be filled in by commercial teams from China, Korea or countries from the Middle East.

PBA commissioner Noli Eala also scrapped the idea of reinforcing the local teams with an import each to spare the clubs from added expense.

SPORTS TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

TENNIS: Wimbledon 2003; Day 3 Highlights; 8 a.m. (r - 5:30 p.m.); Second Round, Day 3; 10:30 a.m. (r); Third Round, Day 4; 7 p.m.; Star Sports - The finest tennis players slug it for a chance to be crowned as the king and queen of the grass court.

GOLF: LPGA Kellogg - Keebler Classic; 10 a.m.; ESPN - The ladies attempt to make the cut as the second round continues from Aurora, Illinois.

US Senior Open Preview; 12 noon (r - 8:30 p.m.); First Round; tomorrow at 2 a.m.; ESPN - Golf's elder statesmen prove they still can play the game as the US Senior Open goes underway from Toledo, Ohio.

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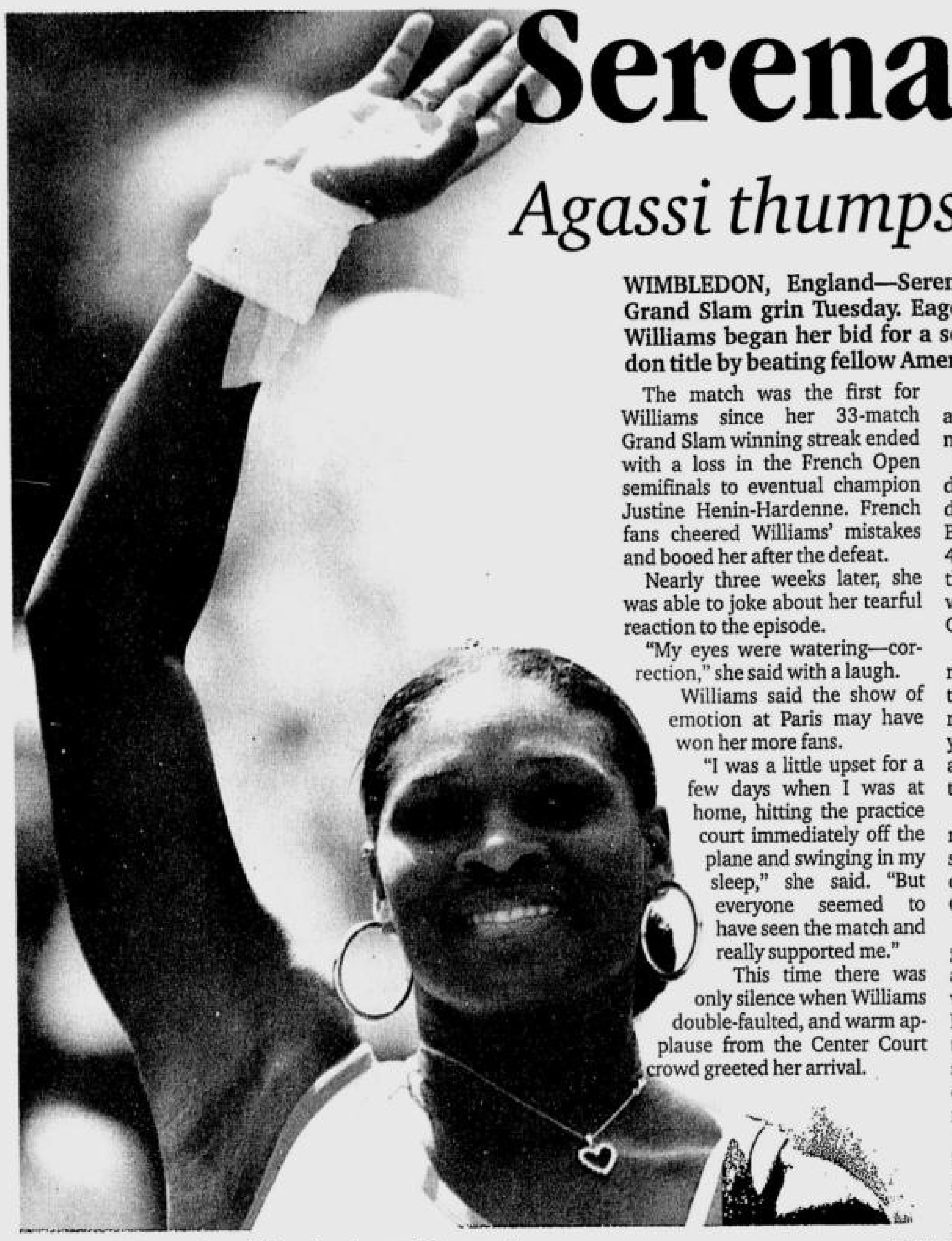
Serena smiling again

Agassi thumps British wild card



SERENA Williams acknowledges the cheers of the crowd. REUTERS

WIMBLEDON, England—Serena Williams regained her Grand Slam grin Tuesday. Eager to put Paris in the past, Williams began her bid for a second consecutive Wimbledon title by beating fellow American Jill Craybas 6-3, 6-3.

The match was the first for Williams since her 33-match Grand Slam winning streak ended with a loss in the French Open semifinals to eventual champion Justine Henin-Hardenne. French fans cheered Williams' mistakes and booed her after the defeat.

Nearly three weeks later, she was able to joke about her tearful reaction to the episode.

"My eyes were watering—correction," she said with a laugh.

Williams said the show of emotion at Paris may have won her more fans.

"I was a little upset for a few days when I was at home, hitting the practice court immediately off the plane and swinging in my sleep," she said. "But everyone seemed to have seen the match and really supported me."

This time there was only silence when Williams double-faulted, and warm applause from the Center Court crowd greeted her arrival.

"I definitely heard a large roar and clap," she said. "That was nice."

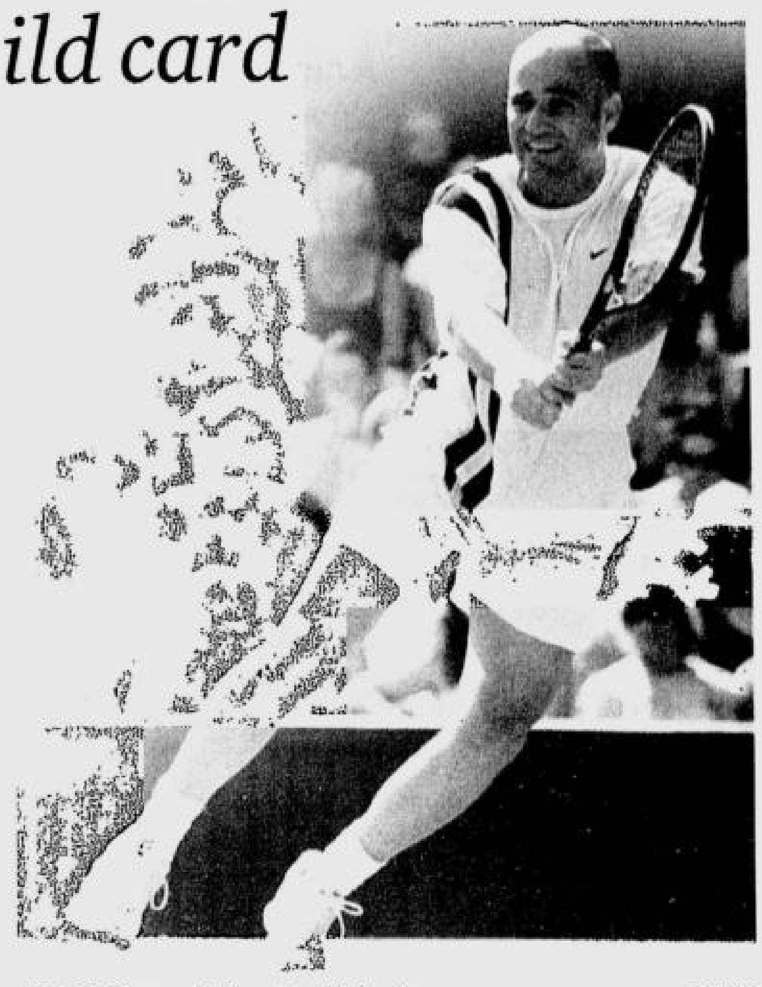
In men's play, No. 2-seeded Andre Agassi began his 13th Wimbledon by hitting 16 aces and beating British wild card Jamie Delgado 6-4, 6-0, 5-7, 6-4. Agassi punctuated the victory with his ritual of bowing and blowing kisses to the Center Court crowd.

"For me at this stage of my career, it's quite a feeling to be out there," said Agassi, 33. "You never really know how many chances you're going to get again. I feel like as I get older, I have more capacity to embrace those moments."

On a second consecutive sunny, mild day at Wimbledon, No. 8-seeded Jennifer Capriati needed only 42 minutes to beat Myriam Casanova 6-1, 6-3.

The top-seeded Williams could get a rematch in the semifinals against No. 3 Henin-Hardenne, who beat Julia Vakulenko 7-5, 6-1. Henin-Hardenne gave no indication that she was bothered by the sore left wrist that prompted her quit during Saturday's final at Rosmalen, Netherlands.

Williams avoided the fate that befell Wimbledon's other defending champion, Lleyton Hewitt, who lost Monday to 6-foot-10 qualifier Ivo Karlovic of Croatia.



AGASSI slams a shot against Delgado. REUTERS

"I didn't want to make history by having two No. 1 defending champions go out," Williams said.

Joining her in the second round were No. 10 Anastasia Myskina, No. 11 Jelena Dokic and No. 15 Elena Dementieva. No. 19 Meghann Shaughnessy and No. 32 Tamarine Tanasugarn lost.

Maria Sharapova, a 16-year-old Russian who has drawn complaints for the shrieks that accompany her shots, made a successful Wimbledon debut by beating 18-year-old American Ashley Harkleroad 6-2, 6-1.

"She grunts loud, yes," Harkleroad said. "There are some other girls that get annoyed with it and think it's ridiculous with her. But to me, I don't really think about it that much." *AP*

Pistons, others rave about 7-foot Serb

MILICIC

AUBURN HILLS, Michigan—The Detroit Pistons are not the only NBA team raving about Darko Milicic.

The Pistons plan to make the 7-foot (2.1-meter), 245-pounder (110.25-kilogram) from Serbia and Montenegro the second player taken in Thursday night's draft.

The Utah Jazz would also pick Milicic if they had the chance. Alberto Dal Cin, Utah's director of international scouting, actually preferred Milicic than the Cleveland Cavaliers' first overall choice of LeBron James.

"Personally, I would take Darko ahead of LeBron James because he has more skills and can play more positions," Dal Cin said. "There are very few can't-miss players, but I have no doubt that Darko is a can't-miss player.

"I think Darko can play center, power forward or small forward. Nobody knows if LeBron is a point or a shooting guard. And Darko will not bring the same kind of problems and expectations that LeBron will because he has already signed a $90 million shoe contract."

Donn Nelson, Dallas' president of basketball operations, said the rest of the Eastern Conference must be wincing that a team as good as the Pistons are set to add a player like Milicic.

Nelson said Milicic impressed him and a slew of NBA scouts last year in Dallas during the Global Games, a competition featuring high school stars from all over the world.

"For his size and frame," Nelson said, "his quickness, agility, skill and power are staggering. If your need is a center or power forward, Darko is your guy."

That's why the Pistons have had their eyes locked on Milicic since Memphis landed the second pick in the NBA draft lottery and had to give it to them to finalize a 6-year-old trade for Otis Thorpe.

"It's been my dream to play in the NBA," Milicic said through an interpreter Tuesday. "I've been waiting for this day for so long."

Detroit was the only team in the Eastern Conference with 50 wins last season, but it was swept by New Jersey in the conference finals in part because of a lack of scoring options. *AP*

Bonds 1st to score '500-500' feat

SAN FRANCISCO—For just a moment, the muscle-bound slugger was a wiry, speedy kid again. Barry Bonds checked out Eric Gagne's deliberate delivery, saw an opening and sprinted to second base, stealing the bag without a throw.

The educated crowd at Pacific Bell Park on Monday night immediately rose in cheers. The San Francisco die-hards had stuck around in the chill until the 11th inning, hoping for just such a moment.

Only then did Bonds realize his latest feat: He had just become the first player in baseball history to steal 500 bases and hit 500 homers.

"I think it's great, something I hope is going to be around a long time," said Bonds, who claimed he wasn't aware of it. "You never know."

But if Bonds spent any time contemplating his milestones, he'd see the true magic of his latest achievement: There might not be another member of the 500-500 club in his lifetime.

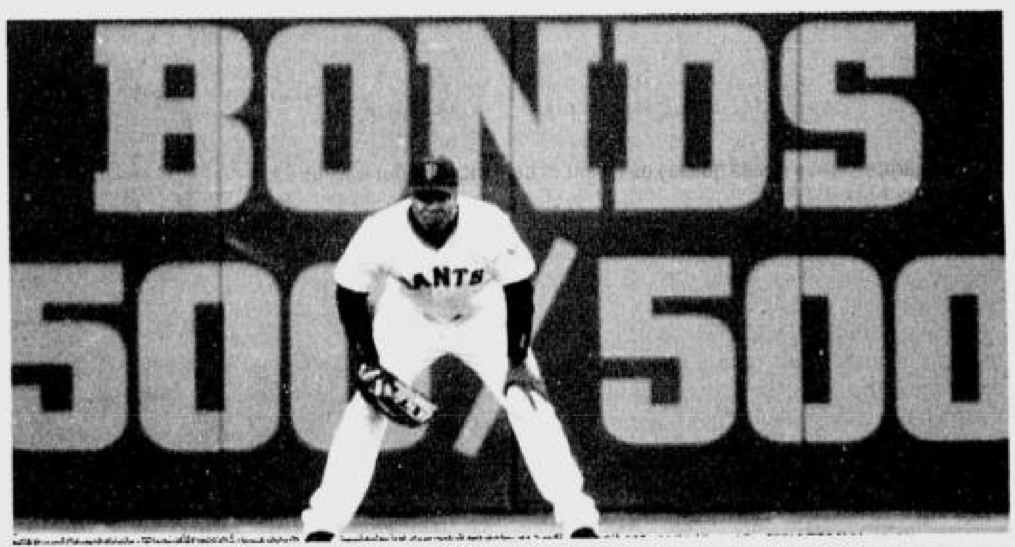
With the stolen base mired in irrelevance during this homer-happy era, most experts believe Bonds' 500 homers and 500 steals could stand for decades as an unmatchable feat.

The statistics prove Bonds has more versatility than any player of his generation, and perhaps anyone in history.

In Arlington, Texas, Carl Everett hit a three-run homer and Mario Ramos earned his first major league victory as the Texas Rangers halted an eight-game losing streak by holding off the Oakland Athletics 7-6 Tuesday.

Earlier in the day, the Rangers reached agreement to trade two-time American League Most Valuable Player Juan Gonzalez to Montreal.

In Chicago, Sammy Sosa hit two of the Cubs' six home runs for his first multihomer game of the season and 59th of his career as Chicago defeated the Milwaukee Brewers 9-1 Tuesday. *AP*



BARRY Bonds of the San Francisco Giants stands in front of a sign honoring him for stealing 500 bases and hitting more than 500 home runs during his career at Pac Bell Park in San Francisco, California. Bonds is the first player in history to reach the 500 home run/500 stolen base club. AFP

'Beckhamania' hits Vietnam

BECKHAM

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam—David Beckham continued his whirlwind tour of Asia with another big entrance Wednesday, triggering loud roars of approval and a burst of silver confetti as he greeted fans in Vietnamese—"Xin chao Vietnam."

An estimated 13,000 soccer-crazy Vietnamese crowded into a Ho Chi Minh City stadium to greet the England soccer captain as he arrived on the back of a pick-up truck.

Some wearing Beckham T-shirts and others holding newspaper articles on him, avid fans filed into the stands at sunrise, some four hours before he made an appearance.

Wearing a white No. 7 jersey and trademark topknot, the Real Madrid-bound Beckham demonstrated his famed kicking skills, sending balls soaring into the stands for fans.

He also had practice sessions with local soccer teams.

Watching from his front row seat in the stands, Do Hoang Khanh, 15, couldn't keep his eyes off his idol. Khanh said he'd never missed watching a Manchester United game in four years, when Beckham was the biggest star at the English Premier League powerhouse.

"It's a joy for Vietnamese football and for his fans. I never dreamed that I would get to see him in person," Khanh said. *AP*

Supporting bout

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

ERIC Buhain said last week he does not have the money for 700 or so athletes for the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games this December.

Cito Dayrit said on Tuesday that's not true.

Eric said he could only spend for 350 athletes.

Cito said Eric should not do that.

Why are they at war?

They are at war because of money.

"Money is the root of all evils," goes the saying.

A friend of mine said, "When there's money, there's trouble. When there's no money, there's also trouble."

How true.

Eric has some money for our Vietnam-bound athletes and yet, he gets into trouble. The trouble, according to Cito, is that Eric spends more for regional games than for national athletes.

"The regional games exclude our athletes who are supposed to win laurels for the country abroad. Eric should spend more for them than those not qualified to win medals abroad," said Cito, or words to that effect.

Cito went on to cite the Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao Games as spending at least P20 million each. The Palaro needs P40 million. Millions more are spent for the Batang Pinoy Games.

"Eric spends so much for these to the detriment of our national athletes. They are counter-productive," said Cito. "In other countries, events for the youth and other regional events are not their priority so that such events are held sparingly."

Eric, as chair of the Philippine Sports Commission, is the finance officer of Philippine sports. That is so because the PSC is the government agency tasked to finance amateur sports.

Cito, as president of the Philippine Olympic Committee, is the country's official Olympic man for all Olympic-sanctioned events in the world, specifically the SEA Games, Asian Games and the Olympic Games.

Eric the money man has the power to choose which amateur sports operations to finance. No PSC statute tells him to spend so much for this or for that.

Cito, although he is the country's Olympic man, cannot force Eric to release funds.

And therein lies the problem?

Not at all.

Eric, as the government's financial emissary for sports, has taken an oath to "judiciously disburse funds" because government money has to be accounted up to the last centavo. He cannot throw caution to the wind because one misspent centavo could land him in jail. That's why Eric, and even his predecessors, has the penchant to stage his own events (Pinoy Games, etc.) because he has total control over them.

For his being extra careful with his money, Eric still gets a blast every now and then from Cito. But then, that goes with the territory.

Listen to Cito's latest tirade: "The trouble with PSC is it always tries to do its own act. Does the International Olympic Committee recognize them? No. It's us they recognize. The entry forms alone for our entries to international events are with us."

Was that a veiled threat? From hereon, Cito won't give Eric & Co. entry forms in future events billed abroad?

To be honest, both are right.

And wrong, too.

Every word that each one of them say, every action that each one of them do, is correct.

Eric is absolutely right on matters of deciding what amount to give to Cito.

Cito is also absolutely right on matters of deciding how many athletes are to be sent to Vietnam and whom to give the extra entry forms for accreditation to the biennial meet.

Remember one of Cristy Jalasco's infamous moves when she was still the country's Olympic boss? She denied Aldrin Cardona, the fighting sports editor from another paper, a media accreditation to cover the 1998 Bangkok Asiad.

Cito can also do that—to Eric or any of Eric's subalterns—if he wants to be nasty. I can stop Cito from doing that but why will I bother? That should be grist for another column.

Their commonality is too obvious for everybody not to know: They don't see eye to eye. That's the error they both cherish. They are cordial, but the few times that they exchanged banter, they were meant only for show.

Between the two of them, Eric is diplomacy personified. He is cool even when confronted by one with a volcanic temper. Cito? He is Mr. Sweetie. Dashing. Appearing always like a knight in shining armor, ready to rescue a damsel in distress. But when provoked, he is hot as a raging inferno; behind that toothy smile is a lion asleep.

Hey, guys, when will you ever start talking? Because if you won't, I've got two pairs of gloves for you.

The Lewis-Klitschko rematch is now badly in need of a supporting bout.

Young Vietnamese shares lead with Paragua, Dableo

By Roy Luarca

ROOMMATES Mark Paragua and Ronald Dableo played to a friendly draw as expected, allowing a young intruder to catch up with them at the top of the Asian 3.2a Zonal Championships at the First Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City.

The Filipinos halved the point after just 15 moves of a Sicilian Defense in the fifth round Tuesday, raising their total to 4 points in the nine-round Swiss System event.

They, however, found a new co-leader in Vietnamese prodigy Le Quang Leim, who beat IM Pham Minh Hoang to post the same total.

Leim, just 13 years old, also stunned Filipino GM Bong Villamayor in the third round.

Just how good Leim is will be known when he faces Dableo, the reigning Philippine Open champion, in Round Six set Wednesday night.

The 19-year-old Paragua, on the other hand, meets compatriot GM Eugene Torre, who climbed to 3.5 points in the company of GM Joey Antonio, Indonesian FM Sadikin Ikwanto, IM Sator Sitanggang and Vietnam's Pham Chuong.

Torre bested Vietnamese Ba Quang in 40 moves of another Sicilian while Antonio drew with Irwanto after 33 moves of a Modern Benoni.

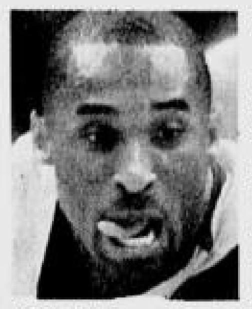
Antonio, bidding to duplicate his triumph in the 1999 edition of the event, meets Chuong.

Still groping for form, Villamayor yielded to Sitanggang in 40 moves of a Slav and was the lowest ranked among the Filipinos with 2.5 points.

WIM Arianne Bo Caoili bounced back in the distaff side following a victory over Nguyen Thi Ngan Binh. Caoili rose to 3 points.

Caoili gained a tie for the 3rd to 8th places with 3 points.

Kobe inks Nike deal


BRYANT

PORTLAND, Oregon—Los Angeles Lakers star Kobe Bryant agreed to terms with Nike, becoming the latest basketball star to sign with the sneaker giant.

Bryant, who paid $8 million to get out of his six-year contract with Adidas Salomon about a year ago, wore several brands of shoes last season while negotiating with Nike and Reebok. Nike declined to disclose terms of the deal Monday or possible plans for a Bryant signature shoe or apparel line.

Monday's signing came about a month after Nike inked sponsorship deals with NBA prospects LeBron James and Carmelo Anthony, who are both expected to be among the top three picks in Thursday's draft.

"The combination of one of the world's best and proven NBA players such as Kobe and LeBron will generate phenomenal energy for the brand throughout the world," Nike spokesperson Mark Shapiro said. *AP*

SPORTSWATCH

Aventajado gets taekwondo award

PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee chair Robert Aventajado, who is also the taekwondo association president, recently won the Korean Presidential Award for his contribution to the development of taekwondo in the Philippines. Aventajado said the Philippines also ranked first among the 20 countries which were given accolade for their wide-ranging program for the sport. The winners were chosen among 171 member countries of the World Taekwondo Federation. "I share this award with the other officials of the Philippine Taekwondo Association as well as the practitioners of the sport," said Aventajado, who was also feted last night by the Korean Embassy in celebration of his Presidential Award. The Philippines, which has about 500,000 taekwondo practitioners, led Croatia, Spain and Switzerland, as among the nations actively propagating the sport and helping it gain world-wide acceptance. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Lewis promised rematch–Klitschko

BERLIN—Vitali Klitschko claimed Tuesday Lennox Lewis promised him a rematch in the ring, although the heavyweight champion then refused to repeat the vow to the cameras. "Now I'm going to take him at his word," Klitschko wrote in a column he penned for Bild, Germany's biggest daily. "While we were still in the ring, he said to me: We're going to have a rematch. I immediately demanded that he say this in front of the camera, but he didn't," he wrote. The sometimes brutal and fascinating fight Saturday in Los Angeles, which ended because of a deep cut above Klitschko's right eye, appears to have won the Ukrainian lots of new fans in America and across the world. *AP*

Holyfield tackles Toney Oct. 4

NEW YORK—At age 40, Evander Holyfield is making a personal declaration of independence, a statement that he won't let his career be controlled by promoters. So when Don King demanded future options as Holyfield's price for a fight with WBA champ Roy Jones Jr., the four-time heavyweight champion turned elsewhere, taking an Oct. 4 match with IBF cruiserweight champ James Toney. The fight does not have a venue yet and won't do much for Holyfield's goal of holding boxing's most glamorous title again. But it will maintain his free agent status. AP champ, maybe not as quickly as I want to be. I may not get it when I want to, but I will get it." *AP*

Anton sweeps touring car meet

ROSARIO, Batangas—Carlos Anton of Red Horse-Gulf Oil-MP Turbo streaked to a third straight sweep in the National Touring Car Championship of the 2003 Casino Filipino Grand Prix last weekend at the Batangas Racing Circuit here. Anton pulled away from the pack with the fastest time of 1:48.861 on the fifth lap and clocked 34:19.299 to rule Race 5 of the event sponsored by Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Toyota Motors Phils., Kilton Motors, MOF Company, Norkis Yamaha, Pagcor Sports and supported by Ford and Addict Mobile. Ferdie Ong of Speedwelle-Rota checked in second 3.992 seconds behind while Philip Alvendia of A3 Motorsports copped third place. Caltex-Havoline lead driver Oscar Aguilar, father of motocross champion Glenn Aguilar, also posted a sweep in the National Junior Touring Car Championship over Red Horse-Gulf Oil MP Turbo's Mike Francisco.

Gov. Petilla chess starts today

INTERNATIONAL Master Chito Garma and IM Jayson Gonzales are the favorites in the 2003 Gov. Remedios Petilla Open Chess Championships which starts today in Tacloban City, Leyte. Sanctioned by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines, the 9-round Swiss System event offers a total prize of P114,000 and trophies with the champion pocketing P50,000. The event is organized by the Tacloban City Executives Chess Club Inc. headed by Dr. Gil Asoy. Sponsored by the provincial government, the event is part of the tourism promotion called "Wow Leyte.'" For details, contact TCECCI president Dr. Asoy (CP 0920-829-1086) or project director engineer Mario Rebano (CP 0920-268-0659.

Fishing tilt goes to Puerto Princesa

PUERTO Princesa, Palawan will host the Standard Insurance Tuna Sportfishing Tournament starting on June 27. The Heavy Tackle Angler of the Year honor is on the line in this 7th leg of the 12-round Angler of the Year derby staged by the Philippine Game Fishing Foundation. Tournament director is PGFF president and Standard Insurance head Judes Eschauz. Rey Buencamino, PGFF managing director and Fish Finder Inc. president, leads the AOY race. For deatils, contact Camille James at PGFF tel nos. 373-0743/373-0248 or e-mail pgff1940@yahoo.com.

Spencer and Fantastic holds 56 fights

A CASH prize of P500,000 will be at stake in the Spencer and Fantastic 5-Cock derby starting with 56 fights at 7 tonight at the Roligon Mega Cockpit. Derby hosts are former San Pablo City mayor Vic Amante, William Co of Rizal and Jaime Venzon. Seeing action are Pol Estrellado, Ucap Cocker of the Year 2003 Sonny Lagon, former PBA commissioner Rudy Salud, Lito Orillanza, William Go, Capt. Emil Chua, Joey and Buboy delos Santos, Alan Tan, Charlie Reyes, former ambassador Danding Cojuangco and Pepito Ngo. Meanwhile, submission of entries to the "Hattah-Hattah 5-Cock Derby" is set tomorrow, from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. The event is slated on June 28, July 1, 3 and 5. Host Rolly Ligon guarantees the top prize of P2.2 while entry fee is P8,800. For details, contact 833-2275 and 833-1638.

Special 4-cocker slated at PCC

PASAY City Cockpit will hold a special special 4-cock derby featuring 62 matches tomorrow. The derby stakes P300,000. For details, contact 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750 for the submission of weights tomorrow from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Meanwhile, pit managers Oscar Gonzales, Eric de la Rosa and Butchoy Olano announced the staging of another 4-cock derby on July 4 to be hosted by businessman Mon Torres. Another 4-cock event blasts off on July 11, before the "PCC Anniversary 5-Cock Derby" on July 15, 17 and 19.

Cainta Coliseum hosts derby

A FOUR-COCK derby will be held today at the Cainta Coliseum in Cainta, Rizal. Staged by Super Gringo and B. Doromal, the derby offers a guaranteed cash prize of P200,000 with the pot money set at P6,600. Winning handlers will get P30,000 and gaffer P15,000. The derby, which has attracted some of the best fighting cock breeders, is sponsored by Pit Fighter, Tape Terminator, Wash Out Shampoo, Nature's Best Red Gel Forte, and Vermex-2.

Athletes to benefit from FG Golf Cup

ARROYO

LOCAL sports talents have found an added source of funding from an unlikely source–the First Gentleman's Golf Cup.

Recognizing the need for money in the development of athletes, discoveries in the recently launched "Medalyang Ginto, May Laban Tayo!" program have been listed among the major beneficiaries of the second edition of the tournament slated tomorrow at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club.

Thus far, more than 30 top corporations have extended their support for the event, coinciding with the birthday of First Gentleman Jose Miguel T. Arroyo, with the amount of pledges received already exceeding last year's donations.

Among the early donors are San Miguel Corporation, WG & A, Inc., Philippine National Oil Company, International Container Terminal Services Inc., GMA 7, Photokina Marketing Corporation and Asia Brewery.

Over 300 executives and businessmen are expected to participate in the tournament which Mr. Arroyo described as "playing for a cause."

Mr. Arroyo said that the proceeds would go a long way toward giving Filipino athletes the needed training, exposure and incentives necessary to boost their chances of bagging that elusive Olympic gold medal.

Toward this end, the "Medalyang Ginto, May Laban Tayo," under the First Gentleman Foundation, is coordinating with the national sports associations in their search for new talents in sports where they are perceived to be among the world's best.

Among these sports are bowling, billiards and chess.

President Arroyo is expected to hit the ceremonial tee-off.

Streetball elims in Davao

THE MINDANAO eliminations of the adidas Streetball Challenge 2003 unfolds at the Gaisano Mall in Davao City from June 27 to 29.

Winners in the Seniors, Women's, Juniors and Midgets divisions gain automatic slots in the Mindanao Finals on June 29, with top finishers representing the region in the National Finals at the Glorietta Activity Center on July 12-13.

The cagefest is co-presented by Globe Gentext in cooperation with WG&A , adidas fragrance and body care for men, Powerade, Viva mineral water, Café Lupe, Warner Music, Purefoods Corned Beef, Ford , Milo, Snickers chocolate bar, Pink magazine, Chalk magazine, Studio 23, Magic 89.9 DWTM and 99.5 RT.

National champions will represent the country to the adidas Asian Streetball Finals 2003 to be held next year in Seoul, South Korea.

San Beda shocks Ateneo

THE SAN Beda Red Lions stunned the Ateneo Blue Eagles, 84-69, Tuesday night in the Grudge Games at the Makati Coliseum.

High-flying Arjun Cordero led San Beda with 21 points and Jerome Paterno added 19 as the Red Lions showed up the depleted Blue Eagles.

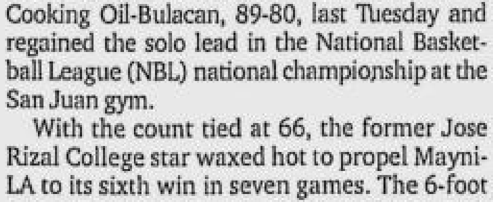
The Eagles, preparing for their defense of the UAAP varsity crown, missed the services of key players Rich Alvarez and Wesley Gonzales and head coach Joel Banal. Ateneo featured former San Beda Red Cubs L.A. Tenorio and Magnum Membrere, who had 15 for Ateneo.

MayniLA leads

NANI Epondulan sparked a fiery 11-3 run in the fourth quarter as MaynILA subdued Spring Cooking Oil-Bulacan, 89-80, last Tuesday and regained the solo lead in the National Basketball League (NBL) national championship at the San Juan gym.

With the count tied at 66, the former Jose Rizal College star waxed hot to propel MayniLA to its sixth win in seven games. The 6-foot Epondulan topscored with 28 points, followed by Francis Sanz with 20.

In the other game, Air Philippines-Bacolod beat Pampanga Bulls, 92-80.



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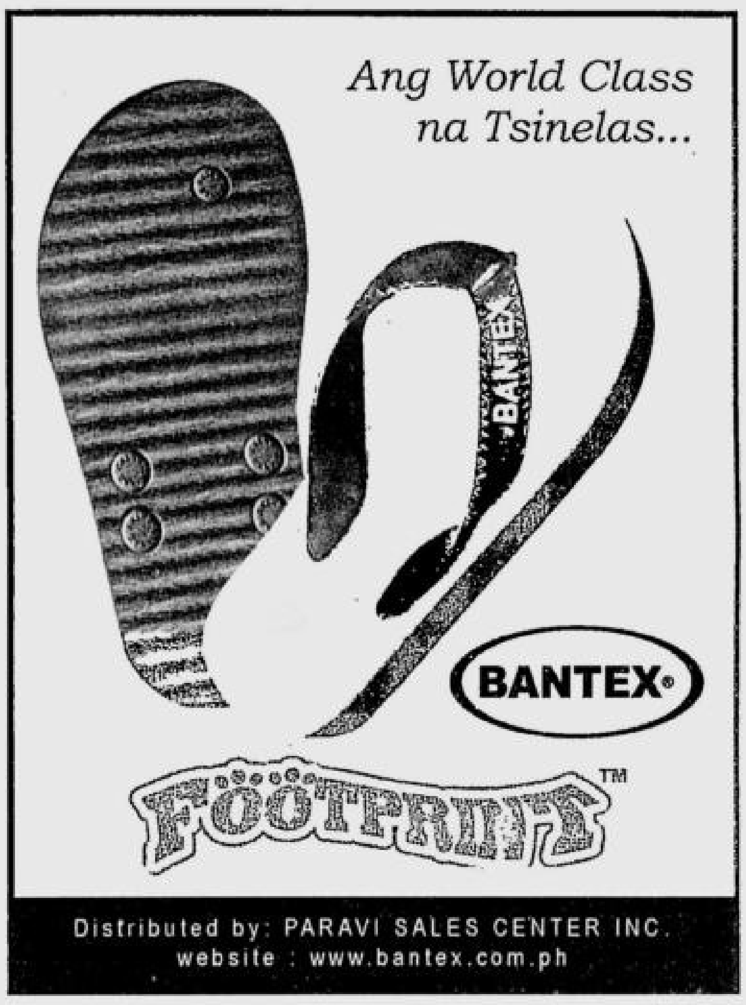
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8	HULK

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2	HULK
3	DAYO
4	KAPIT BAHAY
5	ANG TANGING INA

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5	FRIDA
6	REAL CAN CUN

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3	HULING BIRHEN
4	HULK
5	BERTUD NG PUTIK
6	HIRAM

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Alma: Isn't it enough...

From page A23

my mind wandered back to my interview with Alma. Surely this survivor of love's many battles can teach Lotlot and Eula a thing or two about letting go.

Separations are always messy. Having gone through a failed marriage and several relationships myself, I must say that breaking up is either due to internal or external factors and sometimes a combination of both. It's harder if the cause is internal because you feel helpless in the face of irreconcilable differences. And it's more painful if it's brought about by external reasons since it's frustrating that you both let outer forces come between you.

In the case of Lotlot and Monching, who got married when they were in their teens, it is said that they split up because Monching has been happy-go-lucky so he's not really the family man that he ought to be by now. I'm saddened by the news because they were one of the few show biz couples left whose marriage has remained intact all this time. Lotlot even gave up her flourishing movie career so as to be a full-time mother and wife. Hopefully, it's just a phase and they would eventually reconcile.

As for Eula and Ronnie's break-up, it reads like one of the telenovelas that Eula starred in, but this time she plays the victim which is in stark contrast to her villain roles.

I texted Ronnie's half-brother Eric Quizon for his sentiments about the issue and he texted back: "I don't want to be part of the mess. I want to spare Eula and Miguel the heartaches and trauma. I just might be misinterpreted. Ronnie is okay now. He is strong."

For feedback, e-mail friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com

DID YOU KNOW...

THE PREMIERE of "Hulk," Ang Lee's film of the Marvel Comics character, at SM Megamall attracted many celebrities, including young stars **Gladys Reyes**, **Dingdong Dantes**, **Antoinette Taus**, among others. "Hulk" stars new Australian hunk **Eric Bana** and Oscar best supporting actress (for "A Beautiful Mind") **Jennifer Connely.**

1 DAY TO GO

GLORIETTA 1
Cinema 1 – 11:40, 2:00, 4:20, 6:40 9:00
Cinema 4 – 12:20, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 9.40

GLORIETTA 4
Cinema 1 – 11:45, 2:05, 4:25, 6:45 9:05 11:25
Cinema 3 (THX / GSC) – 12:55, 5:35, 10:15
Cinema 6 – 11:10, 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:30, 10:50

GREENBELT 1
Onstage – 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50

GREENBELT 3
Cinema 1 (THX / GSC) – 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8.30, 10:50
Cinema 2 (THX / GSC) – 12:55, 3:15, 6:35, 10:15
Cinema 4 – 12:20, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 9:40, 12:00

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Cinema 1 (THX) – 11:40, 1:50 4:00, 6:10, 8:20, 10:30
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For more information, pls. call 752-7880 or 82 (Glorietta 4) or 757-7860 to 62 (Greenbelt 3).

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MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)

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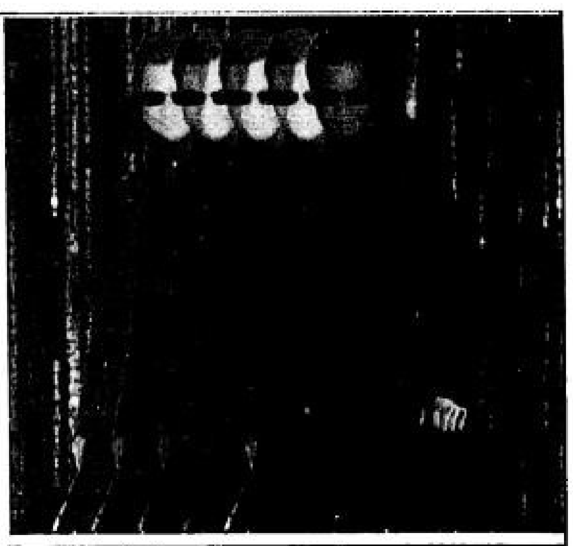

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Ali 1	PANGARAP KONG IBIGIN KA
Ali 2	TUMITIBOK KUMIKIROT
Ali 3	BERTUD NG PUTIK
Ali 4	THE HULK
Ali 5	THE HULK
Ali 6	HULING BIRHEN SA LUPA
Ali 7	TANGING INA

ARANETA COLISEUM	
June 27	GMA AT 53 ANNIVERSARY
June 28	NCAA OPENING CEREMONIES
June 29	PBA GAMES
July 5	MARTIN/REGINE - REPEAT
July 12	UAAP OPENING CEREMONIES
July 13 & 17	UAAP GAMES
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THE HULK PG13 2:15,5:15,8:15	THE HULK PG13 12:45,3:45, 6:45,9:45	ADAPTATION PG13 12:20,2:45,5:10, 7:35,10:00
THE HULK PG13 12:00,3:00, 6:00,9:00	BRUCE ALMIGHTY PG13 1.00,3 10,5:20, 7:30,9.40	THE HULK PG13 1:30,4:30, 7:30,10:30

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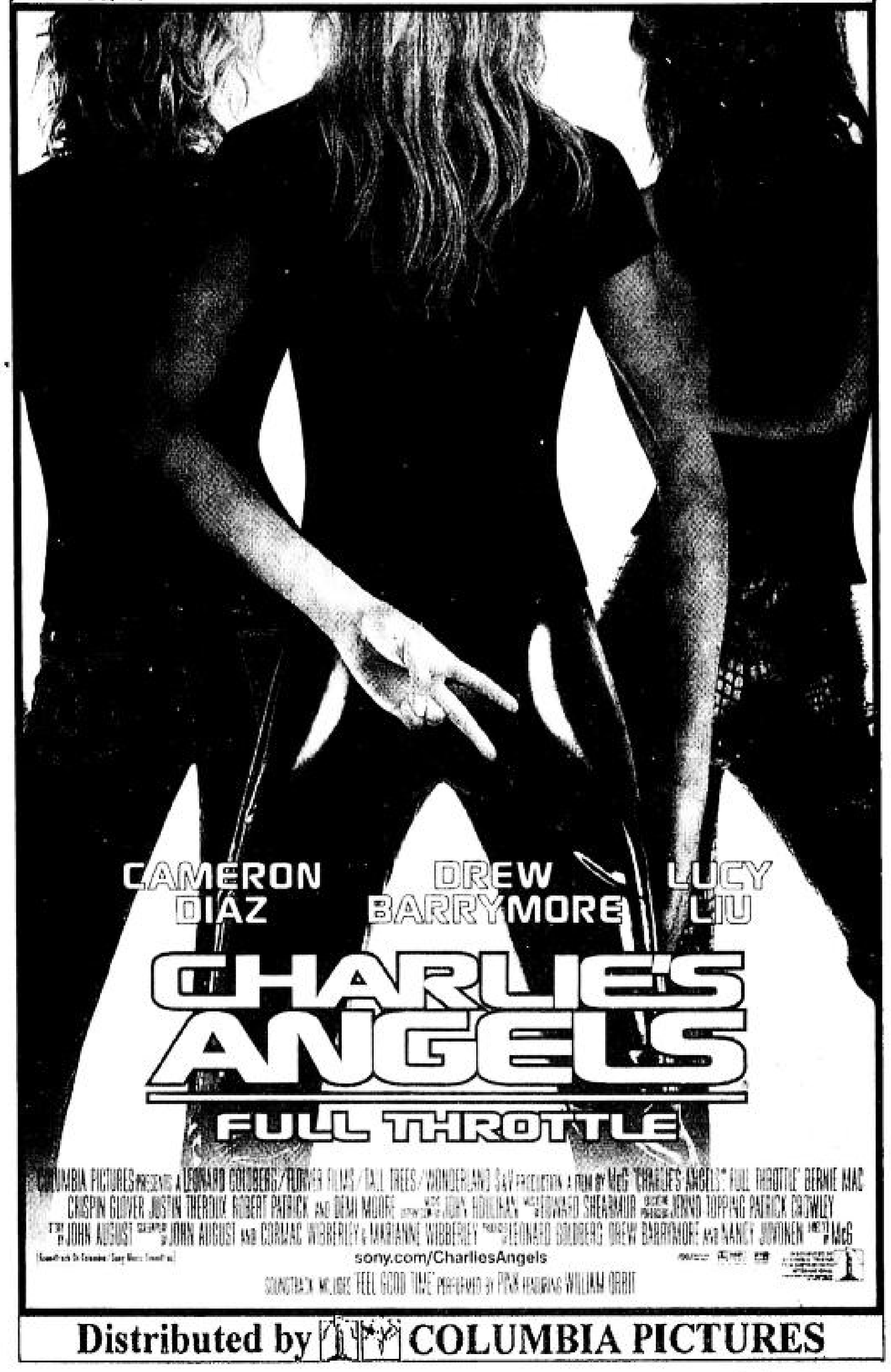

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Love & Romance
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ArtFilm, Greenbelt 1: Punchdrunk Love (Adam Sandler) on June 18 to July 1

Coffee club discussion: June 18, 7pm at Cinema 2, Greenbelt 1

Watch the series of MONOLOGUES with Epi Quizon, Angel Aquino and Pinky Amador and piece these stories together.

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June 25, 7 pm at DeliFrance Area,
GREENBELT 2 **Monologues and SERENADES** July 2, 7 pm

GREENBELT 3 **Monologues and THEATER DUETS** July 3, 7 pm

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Alden Joshua Cedo, Graphics Design
Aries Espinosa, Editor

A hyper-happenin' evening at Conway's

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FROM left, Angel Aquino, Mariles Canizares, Danny Cuevas and Thata Santos.

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Weddings at Waterfront

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The three-day grand affair is highlighted with fashion runway shows, professionally-choreographed by the Philippines' premier fashion director Jackie Aquino. On the grand opening night is Philip Rodriguez's Timeless, also featuring Cebu's Eligible Bachelors and Cebu's Loveliest Ladies for 2003;

Carefree Wedding Essentials, a showcase of luxury lingerie, bridal bouquets and jewelry on July 5; and the famed Sposabella, the three-day event's foremost fashion show featuring bridal creations by Manila and Cebu's top designers, on July 6.

The Sposabella will also feature the exclusive unveiling of Metro Weddings I do Magazine of ABS-CBN Publishing. The said magazine will cover Weddings at the Waterfront in full length, and will feature the event in the upcoming issue. The pretty ladies and crew of "F", ABS-CBN's renowned fashion and lifestyle show, will also grace and cover the three whole days.

For interested exhibitors, call Waterfront Cebu City Hotel and Casino at 232-6888 local 8014 or Manila Sales and Reservations Office at 687-0888.

Indulge in 'Shrimp-tation' at New World Renaissance

THE "PIECE de resistance" for the entire month of July at Emperor Court, New World Renaissance Hotel's fine Cantonese restaurant, is the exquisite denizen of the deep, namely the shrimp. Feast on succulent shrimp creations prepared by the restaurant's master chefs such as luscious Prawns with Assorted Vegetables in Sour and Spicy Soup; Sliced Abalone, Shrimp and Mushroom in Clear Soup; Steamed Shrimps with Japanese Shrimp Roe in Egg White Sauce; Chilled Shrimps Garnished with Sweetened Walnut; Deep Fried Spinach Flavored Shrimp Ball with Sauteed Crystal Shrimps, among other tempting shrimp dishes offered in a delightful a la carte menu. Delectable shrimp preparations also add flavor to Emperor Court's daily lunch buffet and Friday and Saturday dinner buffet.

Emperor Court is open daily from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., and 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. For reservations, call 8116888.

Shrimp-tation

Swim, swing and shop at The Bellevue

THE NEWEST social and business hub in the south of Metro Manila, The Bellevue Hotel, offers an exciting promo for local residents.

The Bellevue's "Swim, Swing and Shop" promo provides reduced rates on the hotel's elegantly furnished rooms plus many activities for a truly pleasant stay. The stylish deluxe room goes for an affordable P2,500 net. This promo includes buffet breakfast for two persons.

"Swim, Swing and Shop" also entitles guests to a delightful dip at the hotel's newly opened infinity and main pool, access to major golf and country clubs for a special fee, and complimentary shuttle service to malls within the Alabang commercial district.

The "beautiful view," as the hotel's name is translated from French, represents only the best that

business hotels offer-elegance, efficient service, friendly staff, convenient location, superb food, modern amenities and exciting activities-at affordable prices. The hotel with five-star appointments is nestled inside an information technology zone within the Filinvest Corporate City. It boasts of 222 deluxe and suite rooms, modern communications and banquet facilities, the latest gym equipment and services, spa treatments, Jacuzzi and infinity pool, bringing to reality the vision of ultimate comfort and convenience.

A time out for ladies at Thien Duong Restaurant

BECAUSE ladies do need a break from work to relax, enjoy and spend quality time with their lady peers, Thien Duong Vietnamese restaurant of Dusit Hotel Nikko will give them special treatment from July 1 to 31 and have its tables laden with a selection of healthy and nutritious dishes.

Some of the meals they may enjoy over dinner or lunch are: Do Bien Voi Me (steamed radish cake with seafood), Rao Dron Goi (mixed Vietnamese salad with ham and shrimp), Goi Haan (green Vietnamese salad steamed with chicken) Pho Ca Tai (rice noodle topped with stir-fried sole fish and vegetable), Bhan Boe (Vietnamese steamed rice with prawns in lotus leaves), Do Ca Kor (steamed whole fish with spicy sauce and rice noodles), Dau Hu Chien Sa Ot (deep-fried curd with lemon grass), Mi Xao Chay (pan-fried noodles with vegetables), Nam Rom Kho Tien (straw mushrooms in hot pot), Dau Hu Xao Dau Hoa Lan (sauteed beancurd with black chinese mushrooms)

All ladies dining at Thien Duong within the month of July will automatically receive a voucher that entitles them to a 10-percent discount at James Cooper Salon-Dusit Hotel Nikko branch. They will also be able to bring home any of the following: discount cards from Manels quality shoes and bags, gift packs from Campbell's or Magnolia Dairy Crème Lite.

For queries and reservations, call 867-3333 extension 3354.

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Discover the wedding industry's top and upcoming suppliers gathered to showcase everything there is to know about wedding preparations: from the best wedding coordinators, photographers and florists to the country's best designers and honeymoon destinations. To inspire couples and share new ideas for a perfect wedding, key guest speakers are taking a break from their grueling careers to fly down to Cebu for a series of symposia with topics on Wedding Feng Shui, Traditions and Superstitious beliefs, Floral & Color Trends, Fashion Forecasts, Wedding Cake Trends and Planning.

The three-day grand affair is highlighted with fashion runway shows, professionally-choreographed by the Philippines' premier fashion director Jackie Aquino. On the grand opening night is Philip Rodriguez's Timeless, also featuring Cebu's Eligible Bachelors and Cebu's Loveliest Ladies for 2003;

Carefree Wedding Essentials, a showcase of luxury lingerie, bridal bouquets and jewelry on July 5; and the famed Sposabella, the three-day event's foremost fashion show featuring bridal creations by Manila and Cebu's top designers, on July 6.

The Sposabella will also feature the exclusive unveiling of Metro Weddings I do Magazine of ABS-CBN Publishing. The said magazine will cover Weddings at the Waterfront in full length, and will feature the event in the upcoming issue. The pretty ladies and crew of "F", ABS-CBN's renowned fashion and lifestyle show, will also grace and cover the three whole days.

For interested exhibitors, call Waterfront Cebu City Hotel and Casino at 232-6888 local 8014 or Manila Sales and Reservations Office at 687-0888.

Indulge in 'Shrimp-tation' at New World Renaissance

THE "PIECE de resistance" for the entire month of July at Emperor Court, New World Renaissance Hotel's fine Cantonese restaurant, is the exquisite denizen of the deep, namely the shrimp. Feast on succulent shrimp creations prepared by the restaurant's master chefs such as luscious Prawns with Assorted Vegetables in Sour and Spicy Soup; Sliced Abalone, Shrimp and Mushroom in Clear Soup; Steamed Shrimps with Japanese Shrimp Roe in Egg White Sauce; Chilled Shrimps Garnished with Sweetened Walnut; Deep Fried Spinach Flavored Shrimp Ball with Sauteed Crystal Shrimps, among other tempting shrimp dishes offered in a delightful a la carte menu. Delectable shrimp preparations also add flavor to Emperor Court's daily lunch buffet and Friday and Saturday dinner buffet.

Emperor Court [illegible] open daily from 11 a.m. [illegible] p.m. [illegible] p.m. [illegible] 10 [illegible] reservation[illegible] 8116888

Shrimp-tation

Swim, swing and shop at The Bellevue

THE NEWEST social and business hub in the south of Metro Manila, The Bellevue Hotel, offers an exciting promo for local residents.

The Bellevue's "Swim, Swing and Shop" promo provides reduced rates on the hotel's elegantly furnished rooms plus many activities for a truly pleasant stay. The stylish deluxe room goes for an affordable P2,500 net. This promo includes buffet breakfast for two persons.

"Swim, Swing and Shop" also entitles guests to a delightful dip at the hotel's newly opened infinity and main pool, access to major golf and country clubs for a special fee, and complimentary shuttle service to malls within the Alabang commercial district.

The "beautiful view," as the hotel's name is translated from French, represents only the best that business hotels offer-elegance, efficient service, friendly staff, convenient location, superb food, modern amenities and exciting activities-at affordable prices. The hotel with five-star appointments is nestled inside an information technology zone within the Filinvest Corporate City. It boasts of 222 deluxe and suite rooms, modern communications and banquet facilities, the latest gym equipment and services, spa treatments, Jacuzzi and infinity pool, bringing to reality the vision of ultimate comfort and convenience.

A time out for ladies at Thien Duong Restaurant

BECAUSE ladies do need a break from work to relax, enjoy and spend quality time with their lady peers, Thien Duong Vietnamese restaurant of Dusit Hotel Nikko will give them special treatment from July 1 to 31 and have its tables laden with a selection of healthy and nutritious dishes.

Some of the meals they may enjoy over dinner or lunch are Do Bien Voi Me (steamed radish cake with seafood), Rau Dron Goi (mixed Vietnamese salad with ham and shrimp), Goi Haan (green Vietnamese salad steamed [illegible] Pho Ca Ta[illegible] spicy sauce and rice noodles), Dau Hu Chien Sa Ot (deep-fried curd with lemon grass), Mi Xao Chay (pan-fried noodles with vegetables), Nam Rom Kho Tien (straw mushrooms in hot pot), Dau Hu Xao Dau Hoa Lan (sauteed beancurd with black chinese mushrooms).

All ladies dining at Thien Duong within the month of July will automatically receive a voucher that entitles them to a 10-percent discount at James Cooper Salon-Dusit Hotel Nikko branch. They will also be able to [illegible] any of the following: [illegible] cards from Manels [illegible] shoes and bags [illegible] Campbe[illegible] Mag[illegible] [illegible] and reservations [illegible] 8[illegible] 3 extension 3354.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Louie C. Camino

Sharon: I might run after all

By Marinel R. Cruz

MEGASTAR Sharon Cuneta said she has grown tired of denying reports that she would run for mayor of Pasay City and that she is now thinking of throwing her hat into the political arena after all.

"*Nananahimik ako. Ang dami nilang* press releases *na isinasali ako* (I'm minding my own business, but they drag my name in their 'press releases')," Sharon told INQUIRER Entertainment on Monday.

Sharon was referring to news reports quoting Pasay City Mayor Peewee Trinidad as saying the Megastar should first live in the city before running for mayor in the 2004 elections.

The star reacted to Trinidad's statement last Sunday in her weekly variety show "Sharon" on ABS-CBN. She said she has been denying reports and rumors about her political plans in Pasay for almost 10 years now, "but since they insist that I'm running, *baka pag-isipan ko na tuloy.*"

"The tabloids carried statements from Mayor Trinidad saying if I would run, I should first buy a house in Pasay," Sharon said. "I've long been looking for a house there. If I do buy one, why should I make it known? I won't borrow money from them anyway."

The actress is the daughter of the late Pablo Cuneta, who was the mayor of Pasay City for 41 years until he retired in 1998 due to old age and sickness.

Cuneta died in September 2000.

On TV, Sharon also said Trinidad is her godfather, having been a sponsor in her baptism.

But Trinidad told INQUIRER Entertainment his statement had been "put out of context."

He said he was simply discussing residency requirements for mayoral candidates.

"What I said was not a challenge," Trinidad said. "I'm not the type of person who would say such a thing, especially to Sharon."

Trinidad refused to discuss the issue further, saying that "talking about it now, without studying it, would only muddle it." He said he would release a press statement on the issue.

Cuneta said Trinidad's statements came out in newspapers while she and her husband, Sen. Francisco "Kiko" Pangilinan, was on a week-long vacation in Thailand.

If she decided to run for public office in Pasay, she would be running against her godfather.

"I can serve the people of Pasay in my own way. I can do many things even if I'm not holding a public office," Cuneta had said in a radio interview in February 2000, six months before her father died.

Then Pasay City vice mayor Jovito Claudio took over the mayor's post when Cuneta died.

CUNETA. "I won't borrow money from them."

Nicolas Cage plays twin brothers

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

DIRECTOR Spike Jonze and writer Charlie Kaufman, the talents behind the radically entertaining hit, "Being John Malkovich," are back with a similarly edgy film, "Adaptation."

This time around, the artistic conundrum revolves around writer Kaufman, who is hired to adapt a book, "The Orchid Thief," into a movie. The book, written by Susan Orlean, is about an orchid breeder named John Laroche, who is obsessed with a rare species of orchid.

However, Kaufman discovers that the book doesn't have a narrative structure and is thus unadaptable into a screenplay. This frustrates Kaufman, and his misery and lack of confidence are heightened by the presence of his twin brother Donald, who is a successful as Charlie is a failure. Almost suicidal, Charlie has a last-ditch inspiration: He'll use his own dilemma as a framework for his script about Orlean and Laroche. But, as the story takes shape, it inadvertently sets in motion a chain of events that impacts on the lives of all the characters involved.

The film peels off layers of truth and fiction, as well as layers of people who are real but are played by other people; real people who are playing characters who play a bigger role in the film than real people!

To make the production even more fascinating and confounding, Charlie and Donald Kaufman are played by the same actor, Nicolas Cage. And the esteemed actress, Meryl Streep, is cast as Susan Orlean.

Most fascinating of all, Charlie Kaufman got the film's material from his own experience. In 1999, he really was commissioned to turn "The Orchid Thief" into a film script, and he had a very tough time. When he finally submitted the screenplay, the writing credit was: "written by Charlie and Donald Kaufman"!

Producer Ed Saxon wondered, "Who the heck is Donald Kaufman?" but the invention of a twin brother worked for Charlie and his screenplay, which combined novelist Susan Orlean's journey with his own.

Orlean approves of Kaufman's audacity. "This was the perfect thing to have happened to my book, which becomes more of a character in the movie than its actual basis," she affirms.

"Adaptation" the movie is about how alienated people are from each other but are still able to adapt to all the lousy things life throws their way. Now, that's a cinematic journey we'd like to take!

Feedback

From Emmanuel S. Espino of Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija: "I would like to thank you for the information you wrote about Armando Garces and Jose de Villa. Next, I would like more info on our legendary filmmakers and their best films, plus notes on the development of television in the Philippines.

"Also, what's happened to award-winning scripts like 'Kasal, Kasali, Kasalo,' 'Sentensiyado' and 'Santa-Santita'? I hear they were bought by Star Cinema. I'm requesting the studio's bosses to pursue these projects. They shouldn't waste opportunities to make the best movies for Filipino viewers."

NUT's notes

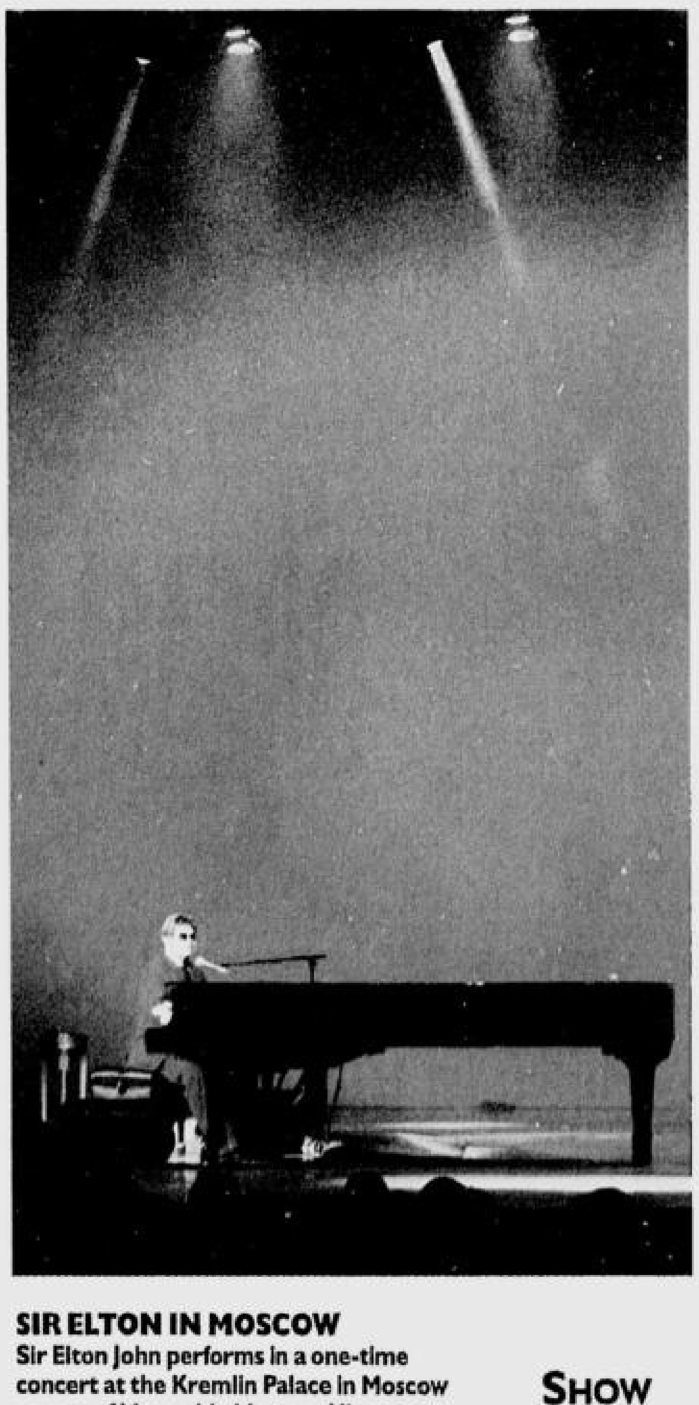
We agree with you that the award-winning scripts you cited are outstanding. What's happened to them? "Kasal" and "Sentesiyado" are still with Star Cinema, little progress there. "Santa-Santita" is with director Laurice Guillen, and may be the first of the three scripts to be filmed.

Every time we bump into Eddie Garcia, we tell him that the lead character in "Sentensiyado" is perfect for him, and we urge him to tell his contacts at Star Cinema that he'd like to read the script. We'll see what happens.

As for "Kasal, Kasali, Kasalo," it's a lively script that's right for Star Cinema's stable of young-adult stars—if they can work out scheduling problems due to their hectic individual careers.

'Cool Jazz'

The new Candid Records album, "Cool Jazz for Hot Nights," has 12 laid-back tracks, including "More Than You Know" with Stacey Kent, "I Like You, You're Nice" with Irene Kral, "I've Got a Crush on You" by Ruby Braff, "Time After Time" featuring jazz vocalist Chet Baker, and Nancy Harrow interpreting "Can't We Be Friends?" Call 724-4832.



SIR ELTON IN MOSCOW
Sir Elton John performs in a one-time concert at the Kremlin Palace in Moscow as part of his worldwide tour. His next stop is London. Tickets to the June 24 show in Moscow were priced between $20 and $300. AP

SHOW STOPPER

Alma: Isn't it enough that they're together?

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

CONSIDERING all the trials that Alma Moreno has had to endure all these years, she could have waved the white flag a long time ago and just bowed out of the scene quietly.

But a born survivor like her does not have the word "Quit" in her vocabulary. She has been bombarded from all corners regarding her debts, her ongoing annulment case with her estranged husband, Parañaque City Mayor Joey Marquez, her plans to run for mayor in the same city in 2004, and her on-and-off bout with scoliosis. Add to these the fragile state of her son Vandolph, who had had a near-fatal car accident, and of her eldest son, Mark Anthony Fernandez, who's out of rehab.

Lesser mortals would have crumbled if they were in Alma's place. She may have had her share of excesses but there's a void that still remains in her.

You can't help but admire Alma for being honest enough to admit that she does have debts. The important thing is she is not running away from them.

She clarified, "I'm the one paying for my obligations. Not Joey as some reports claim. *Nakakatawa naman na pati utang ko gawing* grounds for annulment!"

Stop it

When I asked her to comment on Joey's much-publicized affair with Kris Aquino, she smiled wryly. "*Sila ang matatalino,*" she said. "'Di ko na kailangan pagsabihan sila. Sana lang bumusina muna sila bago lumantad. Masaya na sila kaya tigilan na sana ang paninira sa akin. Hindi pa ba sapat na magkasama na sila?"

I prodded her. "Are you open to the idea that Kris would eventually be close to your kids as their stepmother?"

Alma minced no words: "As long as I'm still alive I don't need anybody to take care of my children. *Kaya ko sila buhayin.*"

She has remained friends with her two other exes, Rudy Fernandez and Dolphy. Why can't she have the same cordial relationship with Joey? "With Daboy and Dolphy, the respect is still there. *Iba ang* situation *namin ni* Joey. *Marami kasi masyadong tao sa paligid niya at sanga-sanga na ang kuwento. Siguro* someday, *pero 'di pa ngayon.*"

So is Joey the last man in her life? She sighed. "*Sa buhay ko minsan lang ako ikinasal. Tama na siguro.* I'll just live for my kids."

As a single mother myself, I can relate to Alma. Surely our love for our kids and for a significant other can't be equated. But being a happier woman in-love would make one a better mother, so I certainly hope that "Ms. Loveliness" finds happiness anew.

Letting go

As I came across the news that Lotlot de Leon and Ramon Christopher have parted ways and Eula Valdez is suing her ex Ronnie Quizon for physical abuse,

ALMA/A21

Spielberg series on Star Movies

SHOW TIME

"TAKEN," Steven Spielberg's 10-episode mini-series on alien abduction, will premiere in Asia on Star Movies in July 2003.

Spielberg, two time-Oscar winner for directing "Schindler's List" and "Saving Private Ryan," is the executive producer of "Taken," a $40-million DreamWorks SKG production and the first ever mini-series to be shown on Star Movies.

The mini-series was a huge hit on American cable television.

Set against the backdrop of actual historical events and featuring spectacular visual effects, "Taken" weaves together the stories of three families over several generations and their crucial role in the history of alien abductions.

Simi Seth, Star VP for programming, said, "'Taken' has all the ingredients of a huge success—story, acting, directing, camera work, music and special effects.

"It is a must-see series," he added.

Spielberg is arguably the most successful filmmaker in history, with his blockbuster movies raking in billions of dollars and winning critical acclaim.

"Taken" was nominated for best mini-series at the 2003 Golden Globe Awards and was the best ever rated show on the Sci-Fi Channel in the US, propelling it to the number 1 rated cable network in prime time.

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	TUMITIBOK KUMIKIROT
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	TUMITIBOK KUMIKIROT
B	SANIB
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
CINEMA-2	PAKNERS
CINEMA-3	BIGAY HILIG
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HULK
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	HULK
CINEMA-6	HULING BIRHEN SA LUPA
CINEMA-7	MATRIX - RELOADED
CINEMA-8	OPERATION BALIKATAN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	HULK
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HULK
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	SANIB
CINEMA-12	ANG TANGING INA
CINEMA-14	BRUCE ALMIGHTY
CINEMA-15	PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
CINEMA 2	PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA
CINEMA 3	HULK
CINEMA 4	SANIB
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

Mikee

Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski

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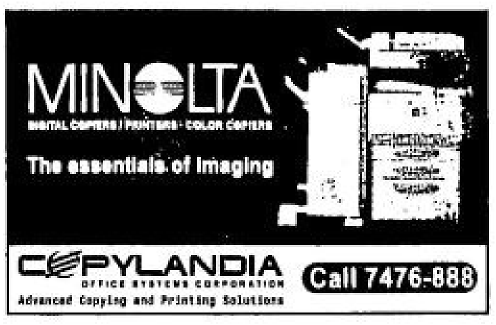
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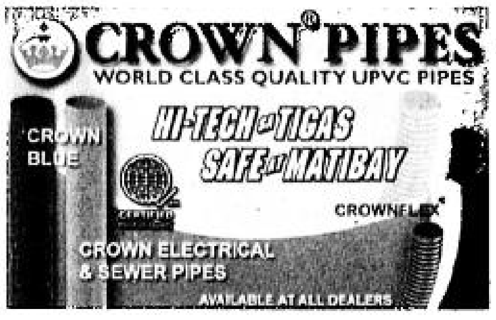


ADB to cancel $300M in loans to RP

By Michelle V. Remo

THE ASIAN Development Bank is set to cancel $300 million worth of previously approved loans to the Philippines due to the government's failure to implement the programs and projects that were intended to be financed by these funds.

The multilateral agency also expressed dismay at the fact that while ADB project and program loans made up a big chunk of the government's official development assistance (ODA) portfolio, these have been the worst in terms of performance.

The ADB specifically cited the following problems in the implementation of its program and project loans: difficulty in mobilizing counterpart funds, weak institutional capacity of executing agencies, prolonged approval procedures, slow progress on reforms, and economic concerns.

ADB country director Thomas Crouch added that of the $3.2 billion in unpaid loans of the country to the ADB, a large part was not delivering on the promises of the programs and projects financed by the funds. "This is not an insignificant amount so it is important that we get the portfolio in robust state," Crouch said.

He said the ADB has been working with the Macapagal administration for the past 18 months to streamline the portfolio and rid it with poor-performing projects and programs.

"There is an 'overhang' of undisbursed loans associated with slow-moving loan components and loans which have low probability of meeting their original objectives," Crouch noted in a press conference yesterday.

Of the $300 million in loans set for cancellation, $70 million consisted of the Grain Sector Development Program (GSDP), which has been terminated due to the government's inability to comply with the program's requirements. These included the failure of the government to convert grain import quotas with tariffs and leveling local grain prices with international ones.

According to Crouch, 55 percent of the $300 million in loans due for cancellation were requested by the government itself. He added that the ADB expected the government to eventually request for the termination of the remaining 45 percent due to the improbability of achieving the desired results.

Patrick Giraud, ADB director for infrastructure, said that aside from the GSDP, other projects were mostly infrastructure projects. He said five airport projects in Mindanao were likely to be canceled since there had been no concrete action yet on the part of the government to start these undertakings. "The deadline for the loan disbursement lapsed in May, but there have even been no biddings conducted yet for possible contractors," Giraud said.

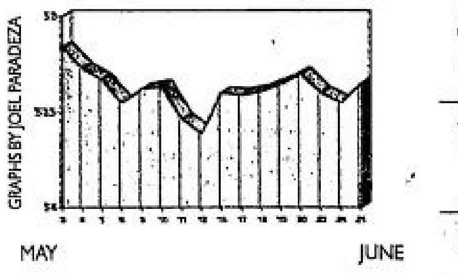
The poor implementation of the projects had also cost the country $7.6 million in commitment fees in 2002. Commitment fees are required to be paid for undisbursed loans due to delays in implementation of projects and programs.

The ADB also said it expected to trim down the active loans from 37 to 29.

The ADB noted that its project loan disbursement ratio for the Philippines was only at 12.7 percent compared with the 16.3-percent average. It implies that average implementation period for ADB project and program loans is about eight years, or much longer than the average of six years.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 53.35 = $1

As of 5 p.m., June 25, 2003

¥ 117.46 = $1

As of 5 p.m., June 25, 2003

GOLD: $348.00-348.50

per ounce Hong Kong, June 25, 2003

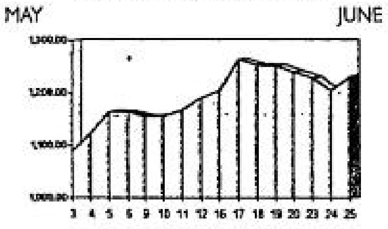
June 25, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.868659	1.000000	53.483000
Japan	Yen .	0.007368	0.008482	0.453600
United Kingdom	Pound	1.445361	1.663900	88.990400
Hongkong	Dollar	0.111392	0.128235	6.858400
Switzerland	Franc	0.653667	0.752502	40.246100
Canada	Dollar	0.639096	0.735727	39.348900
Singapore	Dollar	0.499058	0.574515	30.726800
Australia	Dollar	0.575995	0.663086	35.463800
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.304196	2.652590	141.868500
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.231643	0.266667	14.262200
Brunei	Dollar	0.497628	0.572869	30.638800
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000106	0.000122	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.020922	0.024085	1.288100
UAE	Dirham	0.236511	0.272272	14.561900
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.151200	61.569600
Argentina	Peso	0.313595	0.361011	19.308000
Brazil	Real	0.304046	0.350018	18.720000
Denmark	Kroner	0.134657	0.155017	8.290800
India	Rupee	0.018693	0.021519	1.150900
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.228625	0.263193	14.076400
Mexico	New Peso	0.082773	0.095288	5.096300
New Zealand	Dollar	0.507721	0.584488	31.260200
Norway	Kroner	0.122490	0.141010	7.541600
Pakistan	Rupee	0.015068	0.017346	0.927700
South Africa	Rand	0.111710	0.128601	6.878000
Korea	Won	0.000729	0.000839	0.044900
Sweden	Kroner	0.109139	0.125641	6.719700
Syria	Pound	0.020683	0.023810	1.273400
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025179	0.028986	1.550300
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000545	0.000627	0.033500

STOCK MARKET

Stocks surge 2.23%

SHARE prices closed 2.23 percent higher yesterday, reversing Tuesday's losses as investors took positions ahead of an expected US interest rate cut, dealers said.

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 26.85 points at 1,231.64, having traded between 1,204.79 and 1,233.82.

Turnover rose to 679.7 million shares worth P592.41 million from Tuesday's 300.3 million shares valued at P76.89 million.

Gainers outnumbered losers 50 to 17, with 41 stocks unchanged.

"We've been down for a couple of days such that some shares are near oversold levels. There are bargain-hunting and accumulation activities going on at this stage," said Ron Rodrigo of Accord Capital Equities.

Dealers also said investors have started to take positions for an expected announcement of a US Federal Open Market Committee's rate cut.

"We have had healthy corrections in the past few days and this rebound is expected. Add to this the fact that a US rate cut is welcome news for investors," said Terence Chan of Citiseconline.com.

A lower rate cut would suggest the US economy needs less stimulus to sustain its recovery, while a bigger reduction may prompt investors to shift to equities and other more profitable modes of investments, dealers said.

Manila Electric Co. "B" shares were up 50 centavos at P15 while "A" shares added 65 centavos to P10.25. Meralco parent First Pacific Holdings rose 50 centavos to P13.25.

Meralco earlier forecast a return to profit this year after a P2-billion net loss in 2002, spurring heavy interest in the stock.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone rose P25 to P535. ***AFP***

Gov't raises P47.35B in retail T-bills

THE NATIONAL government has raised P47.35 billion from the sale of retail treasury bonds (RTBs) through a public offering conducted during the past few days, the Bureau of Treasury announced yesterday.

This brought to P63.75 billion the total amount raised by the government from the three- and five-year RTBs after it earlier sold P16.4 billion to accredited securities dealers during an auction last June 12.

The Treasury yesterday marked the close of the public offer period for the RTBs which started on June 16, but noted that final sales might increase as soon as sales reports from provincial branches were tallied.

"The Treasury is extremely pleased with the strong support exhibited by retail investors for the RTBs. The subscriptions received by the selling agents during the offering period have resulted in a total amount that eclipses all previous RTB issues," National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said.

Demand for the offering was high as the cash-rich market was scouting for higher-yielding investment opportunities.

This year's three- and five-year RTBs carry interest rates of 9.5 percent and 10.375 percent, respectively, with interest paid on a quarterly basis.

"This strategic issue of retail bonds and the format through which it was issued clearly demonstrates the government's commitment to a broad-based funding program and developing the domestic capital market," Edeza explained.

Edeza said he hoped that the government would generate the same warm reception for its retail-targeted offerings in the future.

The lead managers for the offering were the Development Bank of the Philippines and Land Bank of the Philippines while HSBC Corp. acted as adviser and bookrunner.

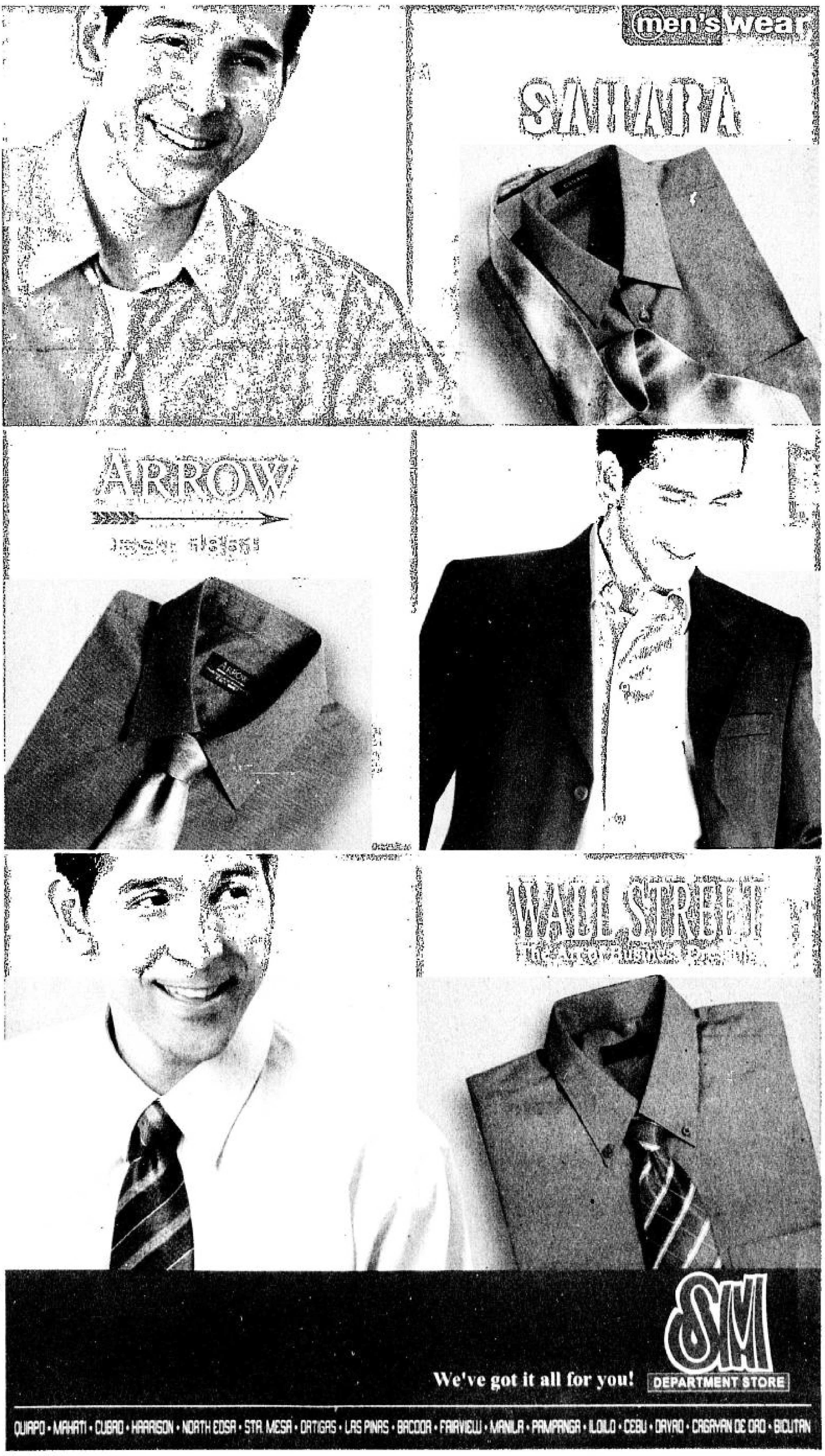
Proceeds from the offering will be used to cover part of the P202-billion budget shortfall projected for this year. ***Doris C. Dumlao***

INTEREST RATES

June 25, 2003-MART1 Rates

Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 25-Jun-03	MART1 24-Jun-03
1 Month	6.5135	6.4729
3 Months	6.5771	6.5659
6 Months	7.1229	7.1845
1 Year	7.6423	7.6604
2 Years	8.4423	8.4154
3 Years	9.4538	9.4442
4 Years	9.9885	9.9808
5 Years	10.3981	10.3385
7 Years	11.2289	11.2519
10 Years	11.4538	11.4827
20 Years	11.9885	11.9865
25 Years	12.4019	12.4135

SOURCE: MART/BLOOMBERG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Sigh's does not matter

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

DON'T look now, but our friends at the Belgian Embassy in Manila are exerting pressure on this cute administration.

At stake in the tactful power play, starring certain high officials of the Belgian Embassy, is an ugly fat contract of a Belgian company with the government.

The company is Transurb Technirail, a Belgian firm which wants to keep its fat contract with the government firm LRTA to maintain LRT Line 1 on Taft Avenue.

Well, the contract already expired more than a year ago, or in February 2002. With the use of magic or whatever, Technirail succeeded in extending it up to April 2003.

From what I heard, Belgian Embassy people are now using some unusual diplomatic tactics with the big bosses over at the DOTC to get some more extension.

You see, the LRTA is under the DOTC. This should only inspire our friends at the Belgian Embassy to go straight to some DOTC big bosses.

* * *

FOR how come the stupid LRTA board insists on following the law, plus the standing policy of this cute administration, by holding a public bidding on the big fat contract?

The LRTA board wants to bid out the maintenance contract for LRT-1, and not just favor Technirail forever. After all, it is worth only P600 million a year.

That is a bad move, at least according to our friends at the Belgian Embassy, as they and the DOTC big bosses sit down in a meeting cordially.

It seems that the Belgian government over there in Europe is wrapping up two small aid packages for this cute administration of Gloriaetta.

Word has it, our friends at the Belgian Embassy think that the issue between Technirail and LRTA may, er, "affect" those two aid packages.

As we all know, "affect" is the diplomatic way of saying ... well, "sorry, no dice." Down here in our barangay, it's the equivalent of some unprintable things.

* * *

ANYWAY, the DOTC must have reasoned that, if only to please our friends at the Belgian Embassy, the LRTA should extend the Technirail contract a little bit more.

And so the LRTA does, but only for a few more months. After the extension, however, the LRTA board decides to conduct a public bidding once and for all.

Lo and behold, just when LRTA is bent on following the law, it gets a treat of endless bad press, coupled with attacks from some honorable gentlemen in Congress.

All of a sudden, media is attacking the LRTA for insisting to maintain the LRT Line-1 itself, while it conducts a public bidding for a new contract.

As if by some prearranged coincidence, three stooges in the House of Representatives also accused the LRTA of overpricing its project on Aurora Boulevard.

It turns out that the LRTA has yet to buy the very same item which the honorable gentlemen claim to be overpriced. Those congressmen must be psychic or something.

* * *

FOR its technical people, anyhow, that Belgian company Technirail hires Filipinos. It has only one Belgian expat, who does some administrative work. In short, an office guy!

Those technical people came from another firm of the Lopez family called Metro, which had the LRT-1 contract before it closed down due to labor problems.

Only a supplier of spare parts at that time, the Belgian company simply hired Metro's technical staff, and—presto—it got a P28-million a month maintenance contract.

For the past couple of months, since the LRTA board did not renew the contract of Technirail, the LRTA did the maintenance work for only P10 million.

With its big fat P28-million a month contract with the LRTA, therefore, that Belgian company Technirail must have been raking it in, no sweat.

If you make such a killing, I think you will also fight to keep the contract, say, by waging a media war against the LRTA, with the help of three stooges in Congress.

* * *

THEY say the real estate and construction sectors are waking up slowly. Some little signs are about, they say, particularly in the housing business.

Well, the only real estate companies which are moving, seriously, right now are Megaworld and the Ayala group.

For instance, Ayala has this housing subsidiary called Laguna Properties. It is building a thousand houses for soldiers in a complete community in Cavite.

By "complete," I mean that the area will have roads, sewage, water, lighting, antiflood, security and what have you. In short, it is not a government project, okay?

Anyway, the mystery in this Ayala group's worthwhile project is, ahh, how in Kurdapya's name can it build decent homes at prices which soldiers can afford?

In its housing project, the soldier only pays P2,344 a month for a two-story townhouse, and P6,146 a month for a single detached two storey unit.

Look, you actually pay more, in the squatter area in Quezon City, for instance, for a bedspace!

* * *

MY info is, the Ayala group can afford to offer such low prices, because it is using what it calls the TEX building system.

Now TEX has nothing to do with your wife's daily, ahh, "reminders" through the cellular telephones.

Laguna Properties will manufacture panels and columns for the houses right there at the site. This cuts transport costs, plus delays, which are costly.

Come to think of it, such a system is only possible if the contractor has a lot of money. Not everybody can put up pre-cast facilities just like that.

Just take a look at the capital of Laguna Properties. It has a paid-up capital of P1 billion. That's ordinarily equivalent to about a thousand contractors of the government.

You know what's more, Laguna Properties has the backing of Ayala group's bank, the one called BPI, which is only one of the biggest banks here.

So who said "size" does not matter? Maybe not for other things in life, such as for sighs and moans, it does not matter. In housing, really, it does.

* * *

AS for Megaworld, its chair Andrew Tan already decided to convert the controversial company BW into a low-cost housing concern.

I'm sure you remember BW. After the company which got messed up in the stock market manipulation scandal a couple of years ago, Tan became its biggest stockholder.

BW made its mark in that stock market scandal as a gaming concern. I don't think Tan is the type to go into gaming. If he is anything, he is a builder of homes.

Tan also sold Megaworld's interest in what should have been the Sheraton Hotel in Malate, despite its having a lease contract with Pagcor to operate a casino there.

And that's the reason why, I think, BW is now a low-cost housing company, instead of a gaming company.

Like the Ayala group, Megaworld also has the financial muscle to cut project costs.

Now if only we have a thousand more Ayalas and Megaworlds, maybe we can cover the housing shortfall of 5 million units.

GMA-7 sees 2003 net income nearing ₱1-B mark

By Abigail L. Ho

GMA Network Inc. expects a record net income of P1 billion this year as its five-month profit has surpassed its P402-million net income for the whole of last year.

"We had profits of P402 million last year. We can get at least double that this year. If we're lucky, we may even hit P1 billion. If we do, it will be the first time for GMA to get a P1-billion net income," GMA Network senior vice president for finance Felipe Yalong said in an interview Tuesday evening.

On the revenue side, he also expressed confidence that the country's second biggest broadcasting firm could breach the P5-billion mark, almost 20 percent higher than last year's gross revenue of P4.2 billion.

GMA Network chair, president and chief executive Felipe Gozon said the company's January-to-May gross revenue of P2.4 billion was 77 percent higher than in the same period last year, with May revenue reaching an all-time high of P699 million, 104 percent better than in the same period a year ago.

"We have been experiencing phenomenal increases in ratings and revenue since last year. We have met our targets for this year and even surpassed some of them this early," he said.

Gozon added that, according to the April surveys conducted by research firms AC Nielsen and AGB Philippines, GMA Network and closest rival ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. tied for the top spot in the ratings game at 14 percent.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of June 25, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	10,000
Banco de oro Univ. Bank	18.5	18.75	18.5	18.5	145,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	46.5	47.5	46.5	47.5	885,600
China Banking Corp.	720	720	715	715	130
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	19	19	19	19	3,000
Citystate Savings Bank	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	33.5	34.5	33.5	34	196,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	30	31	30	31	421,600
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	95	95	95	95	300
Philippine National Bank	23.75	24	23.75	24	54,000
Phil. Savings Bank	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	600
Philippine Trust Co.	60	60	60	60	2,000,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25	5,200
Security Bank Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	22,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	20	20	19.75	19.75	50,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	460,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1480	1480	1480	1480	320
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1080	1095	1080	1095	610
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	19.25	20	19.25	19.5	47,100
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.74	0.77	0.74	0.76	3,640,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	600	615	600	605	34,260
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.043	1,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	4,000,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	3.1	3.15	3.1	3.15	70,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.42	0.44	0.42	0.43	5,800,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	515	535	515	535	134,720
Ivantage Corp.	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.45	400,000
Philweb Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	3,600,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	9.8	10.5	9.8	10.25	1,262,000
Manila Electric Co. B	15.25	15.5	14.75	15	2,824,500
Petron Corp.	1.98	2.06	1.96	2.04	4,437,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	50,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	522,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.85	3	2.85	2.95	3,235,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	60,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.85	2.85	2.8	2.8	153,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	80,200
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	70,500
RFM Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.78	0.78	380,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	350,000
San Miguel Corp. A	54	54.5	54	54.5	107,500
San Miguel Corp. B	62.5	63.5	62.5	63	143,700
Universal Robina Corp.	5	5	5	5	20,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	120,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	90,000
Ayala Corp	4.75	4.9	4.7	4.85	3,470,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.36	2.36	2.36	2.36	2,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.032	9,800,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	10,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.7	1.76	1.64	1.7	27,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	350,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc	9.7	9.7	9.7	9.7	10,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	200,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.52	0.58	0.52	0.57	22,520,000
A Brown Co. Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	10,000
Basic Consolidated Inc	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	500,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	10,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	3,700,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	140,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.031	0.031	0.031	0.031	200,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	13	13.75	12.75	13.25	1,921,500
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	10,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	500,000
Ionics Inc.	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83	230,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.73	0.74	0.73	0.74	690,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	100,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	330,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.29	0.33	0.29	0.33	100,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.25	0.27	0.25	0.27	7,730,000
Music Corp.	0.34	0.37	0.34	0.35	2,830,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.1	0.12	800,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	1,200,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	50,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coal Inc.	1.36	1.4	1.36	1.4	32,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	130,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.76	1.78	1.74	1.74	30,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.06	0.07	0.06	0.07	2,000,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	15.75	15.75	15.75	15.75	6,200
Steniel Manufacturing	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	90,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.53	0.57	0.53	0.55	11,210,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.42	0.46	0.42	0.45	690,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	700,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.4	160,000
BONDS, PREFFERED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	19.5	20	19.5	19.5	930,500
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.8	6.1	5.8	6	2,804,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	20,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.19	0.2	0.19	0.2	960,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.165	0.185	0.165	0.185	7,730,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.215	0.225	0.215	0.225	3,810,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.02	1.06	1.02	1.04	10,515,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.15	0.15	0.13	0.15	2,210,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.19	0.2	0.19	0.2	980,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	4,001,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.7	5.9	5.7	5.9	14,810,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	5,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	50,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.003	0.003	0.0028	0.0028	6,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	1,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.004	0.0042	0.0036	0.004	403,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	20,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	200,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	5,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0028	0.003	0.0028	0.003	15,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	42,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	40,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.022	0.032	0.022	0.032	3,300,000
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POWER INDUSTRY REFORM ACT AMENDMENT

Energy regulatory body seeks fiscal autonomy

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE ENERGY Regulatory Commission yesterday urged Congress to amend the Electric Power Industry Reform Act and give the ERC fiscal autonomy for it to do its job more efficiently.

"I believe that for the ERC to be strong and independent, it should have fiscal autonomy," ERC chair Manuel Sanchez said.

Sanchez said that limits on regulatory resources had been a perennial constraint in the implementation of industry reforms initiated by the ERC.

"The world is watching how the (ERC) will provide a regulatory environment that will transform the industry into a dynamic and competitive electricity market," he said.

The ERC is celebrating today its second anniversary, which coincides with that of the effectivity of the power reform law.

Sanchez said that in the past two years, the ERC had issued 24 decisions for the unbundling of utilities' rates; 78 orders for provisional authority to reduce rates of electric cooperatives as a result of loan condonation, and nine sets of regulations, guidelines and procedures.

In another statement, the ERC said it had issued certificates of compliance (COCs) to five more independent power producers.

Despite the liberalization of the power generation sector, electricity producers are required to secure a COC before they can start operations.

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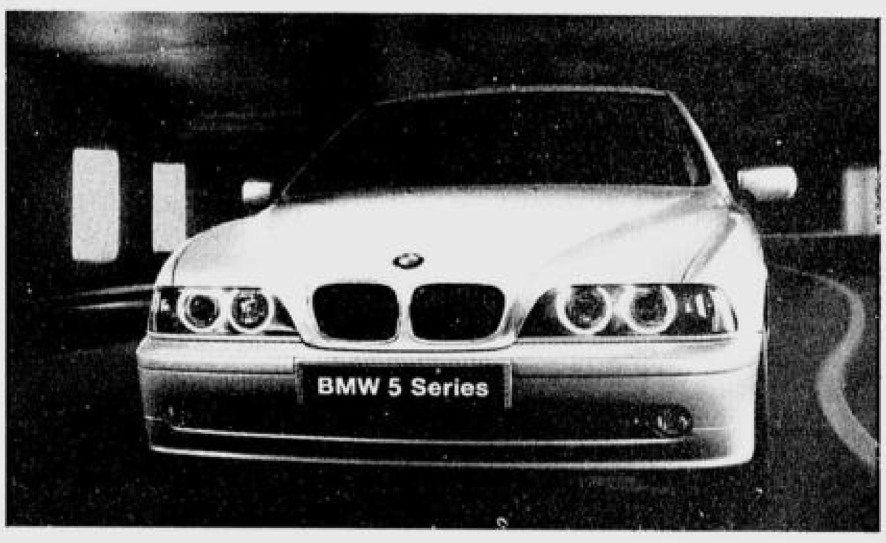

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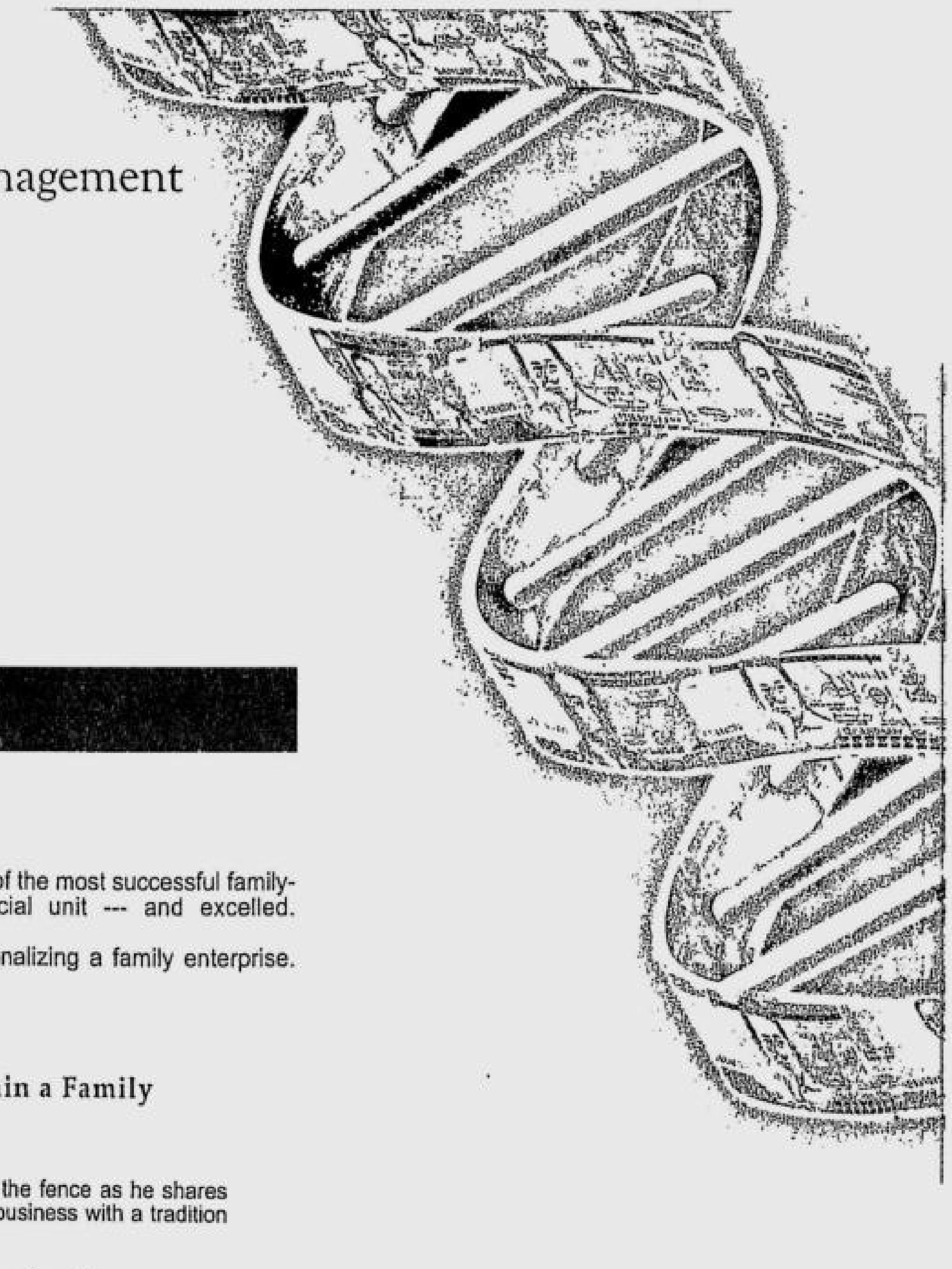

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Mr. Erramon I. Aboitiz
Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President
Aboitiz Ventures Inc.
"Who gets what, when, and how?" is an important question in family businesses. He carefully dissects the intricacies of passing down the business to the next generation.

Keeping Family Trees Healthy: Cultivating Family Relationships
Ms. Regina Paz L. Lopez
Managing Director, ABS-CBN Foundation Inc.
Watch and be electrified as the secrets to strengthen and improve family relationships are unveiled by a member of the powerful clan presiding over ABS-CBN, and running Meralco.

Mr. Dad: Professionalizing the Family Business
Mr. Martin P. Lorenzo
President and Chief Executive, Pancake House, Inc.
Know where and when to draw the line between being personal and professional. Discover the ideal approach as he unveils the processes entailed in professionalizing a family business.

Growing Family Trees: A Look Into Family Relationships
Mr. Ricardo H. Mercado
Professorial Lecturer, John Gokongwei School of Management, Ateneo de Manila University
Have a better understanding of the dynamics involved in family relationships. Listen as he imparts his expertise on the bonds that keep families together.

Outsider, Insider: Working within a Family Business
Mr. Aurelio R. Montinola III
President, BPI Family Savings Bank
See the point-of-view from the other side of the fence as he shares practical wisdom about working for a family business with a tradition of leadership behind it.

The Hands That Rock the Cradle: Family Business Governance
Mr. Cristino L. Panlilio
President, Balibago Waterworks System, Inc.
Exactly how does one treat family members-cum-business partners? He shares his insights on how to effectively balance the personal and professional sides of running a family business.

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Ms. Bernadine T. Siy
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Mondays to Saturdays
12:00 noon
Day before publication
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12:00 noon
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P3.295M 8903461 loc 34

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INVITATION TO REGISTER, APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation (PPDC) invites interested Filipino contractors currently in good standing to register, apply for eligibility and if subsequently found eligible, to bid for the following project described below:

Project Title/ Scope of Work	Similar Contracts	Amount of Credit Line/ Cash Deposit Certificate
One (1) Year "On-Call" Supply of Laborers and Equipment for Various Park Support Services (WSA-02-006)	Supply of manpower and equipment for various utility and maintenance services of industrial parks, commercial parks, universities	Pesos Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Only (P250,000.00)

A. The project is located at the Petrochemical Industrial Estate (PIE) in Limay and Mariveles, Bataan, with funding to be provided by PPDC.

B. Only contractors duly registered with PPDC shall be allowed to participate in the bidding. Interested bidders must register not later than July 8, 2003. A list of basic requirements for registration is available from the BAC Secretariat at the PPDC Makati office.

C. Eligibility statement forms and bidding documents will be issued to registered bidders from **June 23 - July 15, 2003**, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P800.00.

D. Application for Eligibility shall be evaluated using a "PASS/FAIL" criteria, and only eligible bidders shall be allowed to participate in the bidding. All bids shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the Contractor's offer, subject to Post-qualification before an award is made.

E. SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:
Pre-Bid Conference (PPDC-Bataan) - **July 18, 2003 at 10:00 a.m.**
Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Opening of Bids (PPDC Makati) - **August 08, 2003 at 10:00 a.m.**

F. All particulars relative to registration, eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids, and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of Executive Order No. 40 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

G. PPDC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any defect or informality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PPDC. PPDC further assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses or loss they may incur in the preparation of their bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **VICTORIO MARIO A. DIMAGIBA**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - June 18 & 26, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
BUREAU OF POSTHARVEST RESEARCH AND EXTENSION
Main Office: CLSU Compound, Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija
Tel. Nos. (044) 456-0213; 456-0287 / Fax No. 456-0110

Liaison Office: 3F ATI Bldg., Elliptical Road, Diliman, Q.C.
Tel. Nos. 927-4019; 927-4029 / Fax No. 926-8159

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

All reputable suppliers/manufacturers with an NFCC of at least 7.9 Million pesos and whose largest single and similar contract for the last three (3) years is at least P3.95 Million pesos are invited to apply for eligibility and to bid for the SUPPLY, DELIVERY AND TESTING OF FOUR (4) UNITS REFRIGERATED TRUCKS as follows:

Quantity/ Unit	Specifications	Approved Budget for the Contract
2 units 1 unit 1 unit	6-Wheeler Truck with 16-Footer Refrigerated Van 6-Wheeler Truck with 20-Footer Refrigerated Van 4-Wheeler Truck with 10-Footer Refrigerated Van **Refrigerated Van:** ◆ Aluminum with sprayed polyurethane insulation all around and heavy ◆ Heavy duty stainless steel hinges camlock mechanism ◆ Maximum cooling temperature of –10°C with 90-95 RH ◆ Engine-driven compressor and an electric stand-by plug-in power system (3 phase, 220-240 v) **Truck:** ◆ Brand-new; Diesel engine; ◆ Airconditioned cab; with standard set of tools, spare tires, EWD, and operation manuel ◆ With LTO Registration and comprehensive insurance ◆ With established dealerships in Benguet province capable of providing full-repair & parts supply services	P 7,900,000.00

Interested suppliers/manufacturers may obtain the required **eligibility form** from the BPRE Main Office from **June 26 to July 8, 2003. The deadline for the submission of applications for eligibility is on July 8, 2003.**

Bid documents shall be issued to eligible bidders from July 1-9, 2003 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,000.00.

The **Prebid Conference** shall be held at **10:00 a.m.** of **July 11, 2003** at the Conference Room of the BPRE Liaison Office at 3/F ATI Bldg., Elliptical Road, Quezon City. The **Bidding Conference** is at **10:00 p.m.** of **July 28, 2003** at the same venue.

For further inquiries, please call **MR. RONALDO S.R. REYES**, DA-BPRE BAC Vice-Chair, at any of the following nos. (044) 4560287 / 4560213 / 4560282.

The BPRE reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality/ies and to accept any offer that it considers most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **RICARDO L. CACHUELA**
Executive Director

(PDI–June 26 & July 4, 2003)

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that Urbancorp Realty Developers Inc. Cert. #7932 & #20928 in the name of Rosario M. Dinglasan was lost. If no contest received new cert. will be issued (PDI-June 26, July 3, 10, 2003)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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1st Death Anniversary

Felipa Carrillo-Flores, MD

San Matias, Sto. Tomas, Pampanga
(Died 28 June 2002)

The following Masses will be offered:

		June 26
1.	Sta. Maria Della Strada Parish *Loyola Heights, Q.C.*	6:00 AM
2.	Assumption Cathedral *San Fernando, Pampanga*	6:15 AM
3.	Our Lady of Pentecost Parish *Loyola Heights, QC*	6:30 AM
4.	San Matias Parish *San Matias, Sto. Tomas, Pampanga*	4:30 PM
		June 28
5.	St. James the Great Church *Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City*	6:20 AM
6.	Our Lady of Pentecost Parish *Loyola Heights, QC*	6:30 AM
7.	Divine Word Theologate *Chicago, Illinois*	8:00 AM
8.	St. Raymond Parish *Des Plaines, Illinois*	8:00 AM
9.	Passionist Monastery *Chicago, Illinois*	8:00 AM
10.	Apalit Parish Church *Apalit, Pampanga*	10:30 AM
11.	Holy Family Church *Orlando, Florida*	12:30 PM
12.	Our Lady of Remedios Chapel *Don Enrique Hts., Quezon City*	5:00 PM
13.	Parroquia de San Cristobal *Madrid, España*	5:30 PM
14.	Parroquia de Nuestra Señora Virgen del Espina *Madrid, España*	5:30 PM
15.	St. Cecilia Parish *Mt. Prospect, Illinois*	6:30 PM
16.	Parroquia de Nuestra Señora Virgen del Carmen *Sevilla, España*	8:00 PM

Our Dearly Beloved

C/M EDGAR R. MARTINEZ

PMMA Class 1985, MSc in MET (N) WMU 1996

Peacefully joined his Creator at the age of 40.

His beloved wife, NINFA; son FRANKLIN HUEY; father EMILIO; mother ZENY; sisters ANNIE & SUSAN and brother EUGENE; and other relatives request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Chapel of the Parish of the Hearts of Jesus & Mary, Bulletin St., cor. Daily Mirror St. West Triangle, Q.C.

Cremation will be on Saturday, June 28, 2003 at the Loyola Crematorium, Marikina City at 1:00 p.m.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Matthew 10:39

DEATH NOTICES

GLICERIA V. MANSILLA
Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on June 23, 2003 at the age of 78.

Interment will be on June 28, 2003 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

Sir Knight CARLOS A. BRIONES
Joined his Creator on June 21, 2003 at the age of 51.

Interment will be on Saturday, June 28, 2003 at the Tarlac Catholic Cemetery after the 8:30 a.m. Mass.

NICOLAS J. DIMAANO
Peacefully joined our Lord on June 23, 2003 at the age of 83.

Interment will be on Saturday, June 28, 2003 at the Basilica at the Immaculate Concepcion after the 3:00 p.m. Mass.

ROSARIO P. DIAZ, M.D.
Joined her Creator on June 23, 2003 at the age of 63.

Interment to be announced later.

ROBERTO ESCALANTE
Joined his Creator on June 17, 2003 at the age of 44.

Interment will be on June 29, 2003

We design
OBITUARIES
for free.

Our Beloved

EDUARDO CHAN GIMENO SR.

of Balaoan La Union and Baguio City

Peacefully joined his Creator on 22 June 2003 at the age of 69.

His loving wife **Angelina Riva;** sons & daughters, sons-in-law & daughters-in-law

Jaime & Melanie	– daughters **Angeline Ann**, **Gheilani**
Raquel & Nelson	– sons **Neil Edson**, **Angelo**
Eduardo Jr. & Carmelita	– daughters **Sylvia Mae**, **Sabrina Marie**, and **Suzzaine**
Rizalito & Lourdes	– son **Kurt**
Miguel	
Jeanette & Benjie	– daughters **Alyzza**, **Ashly**, **Alexis** and **Ingrid**

Angelita, and **Gerry**; sisters **Juanita Sy-An** (†), **Luz C. Biabe**, **Corazon G. Favis**, **Asuncion Chanpinco**, and **Lourdes Chan** (†); brothers **Constancio Chan Gimeno** (†), **Benedicto Chan Gimeno** (†); relatives and friends request the readers to remember him in their prayers.

His body lies in state at Baguio Memorial Chapel B, Naguilian Road, Baguio City.

Requiem Mass will be held at Baguio Memorial Chapel on Friday, June 27, 2003, 8:00PM.

Interment will be on **Saturday, June 28, 2003** at **8:00AM** at the Baguio Cemetery.

ALODIA YATCO VDA. DE MUÑOZ

Her late husband Judge **EMANUEL**; children **MANOLITO & MARYANN AMISTOSO, MAGGIE (NENE) & GREG ALCARAZ JR., JIMMY (†) & CORA, ONY & MILADY JANAIRO, EDDIE & MARIE GALVEZ, BOBBY & CHICHI LACSON**; grandchildren and great grandchildren, brothers and sisters, nephews & nieces request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, June 29, 2003 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

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INVITATION TO BID

The **ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT (ZCWD)** is inviting interested and licensed suppliers of uPVC Pipes, and uPVC Bends to submit for the following:

PR/JO No.	Description
6769	uPVC Pipes & Bends with rubber rings for Stock replenishment use at the Property Section.

Interested suppliers may obtain **Bid Forms and Detailed Specifications** at the BAC II Secretariat, 2F, ZCWD Bldg., Pilar St., Zamboanga City after payment of a minimal non-refundable fee of P500.00.

Submission of Bids : July 21, 2003
10:00 a.m., 2F ZCWD Main Office Bldg.
Pilar St., Zamboanga City

The ZCWD reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive minor informalities in the bids received, and to award the contract to the supplier whose bid, as evaluated by the BAC II, is the most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ALEJO S. ROJAS, JR.**
BAC II Chairman

(PDI–June 26, 2003)

GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM
Financial Center, Roxas Boulevard
Pasay City, 1308

NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the deadline for the submission of bids/proposals to act as External Fund Managers to manage a portion of the funds of the **GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM (GSIS)** is extended up to **3:00 p.m. of Friday, July 11, 2003.**

Accordingly, the target dates for the activities pertaining to the bidding process shall be adjusted as follows:

a) Issuance of Terms of Reference (TOR)	**25 June - 02 July 2003**
b) Evaluation of Bids/Proposals	**15-16 July 2003**
c) Presentation of Qualified Bidders to the GSIS Investment Committee	**22-23 July 2003**
d) Awarding To Winning Bidders	**08 August 2003**

The GSIS reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive any defect(s) or form(s) received and to accept the proposal deemed most beneficial to the System but does not guarantee that an award shall be made. The decision of the System shall be final and binding.

(Sgd.) **WINSTON F. GARCIA**
President and General Manager

(PDI - June 26, 27 & 28, 2003)

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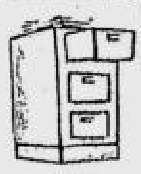

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Kubota Tractor Model L4200DT	Brgy. Sinturisan Sitio Owakan, San Antonio Quezon	PhP 350,000
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For inquiries and further details, please call Mr. Frolian Tejada at 885 3739 and (0917)627 8288 or Mr. Ariel Matubis at 885 3706. Offers should be sent to the above officers at Building E, Bonifacio Center, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila not later than July 7, 2003. Transport will be provided for a site visit to Quezon scheduled on July 3, 2003. All offers to purchase shall be subject to approval by company approving authority.

SENATE PRESIDENT FRANKLIN M. DRILON

and the

MEMBERS OF THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES

deeply mourn the demise of a distinguished colleague

HONORABLE RENATO L. "COMPAÑERO" CAYETANO

Senator of the Republic of the Philippines
(1998-2003)

who joined his Creator last Tuesday, 24 June 2003 at the age of 68.

His body will be brought to
the Senate of the Philippines on
Friday, 27 June 2003 at 1:00 p.m.
for the Necrological Services at the Session Hall at 1:30 p.m.

Interment will be on Sunday, 29 June 2003 at the Garden of Memories, Pateros.

We request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

SR. DON ARTURO VENANCIO ROCHA Y PEREZ

Consul General de Chile a.h.

Entrego su alma al Creador el 23 de Junio, 2003 en Dublin, Irlanda, despues de recibir los auxilios de la Santa Iglesia.

*Su desconsolada esposa, **Maria Luisa**, sus hijos **Mari Carmen y Raymond, Maria Blanca, Arturo y Beatriz**, su nieto **Ray**, sus hermanos **Lita, Antonio, Juan Jose, Eduardo y Nuria**, sobrinos, suegros, parientes politicos y demas parientes ruegan al piadoso lector una oracion por el eterno descanso de su alma.*

Se anunciaran los servicios necrologicos.

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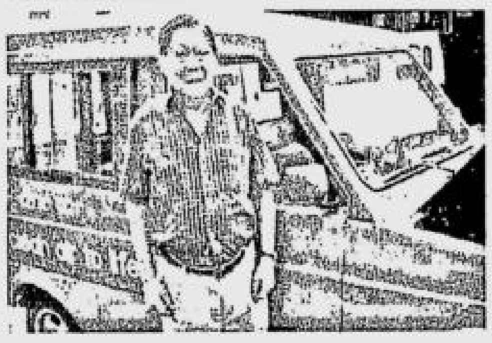
Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

PHOTOS BY ERIK ARAZAS



MARAVE AND HIS EV
The EV is powered by five deep cycle batteries equipped with an onboard battery charger. Recharging time is four hours through your ordinary 220-volt household outlet.

Why this man won't pull plug off his electric dream

By Tessa R. Salazar

NO one can stop engineer Romeo R. Marave from producing an electric-powered vehicle specifically suited for Philippine conditions and Filipino drivers.

It's not that he's fed up with the high prices of fossil fuels, though that probably is one factor for his persistence. What he's more concerned about is the danger air pollution poses to motorists, especially public utility drivers and passengers.

To drive home his point, Marave reveals that Manila has become the fourth most polluted city in Asia.

That, indeed, is shocking news. And for Marave, no high-tech super-efficient internal combustion engine can undo this predicament.

According to him, the internal combustion engine, known in thermodynamics circles as the Otto cycle, is at most only "25 percent efficient," even if present technologies boast of multiple valve and electronic ignition or EFI engines.

He explains that only 25 percent of the energy stored in gasoline fuel is actually converted to horsepower. The rest is radiated as heat from the engine and radiator, or as exhaust through the tail pipes.

Translating that into economic terms, $3 billion of the annual Philippines' petroleum imports amounting to $4 billion is burned away unused.

Marave says extended traffic congestion common in the country's urban centers compounds the engines' inefficiency. In stop-and-go traffic, you're burning fuel and not moving at the same time.

Electric vehicle

Electric engines are everything internal combustion engines are not, Marave professes. An electric vehicle, for starters, consumes energy only when in motion, or when the driver steps on the accelerator. Electric engines emit no fumes, and are very quiet, nearly silent, when running.

The principle of the electric engine lies simply in the "fuel" it uses: electricity, which is a pure form of energy one can get. Electricity, in this case, is stored in "deep cycle" batteries, which can be drained for up to 80 percent of its capacity (as opposed to the ordinary "shallow cycle" car battery that needs a recharge from

WHY/ B9

Nissan to launch X-Trail

NISSAN Motor Phils. Inc. is all set to launch its all-new entry into the sports utility vehicle (SUV) market in the beginning of the third quarter.

"The Nissan X-Trail will be launched as planned," says NMPI sales planning and dealer development head Chock Camacho. He clarifies that sales is expected to kick off by July, despite the uncertainty of the new value-based tax system's implementation.

Reservations

"In fact, we have started accepting reservations for the first 200 units, quoted at current tax rates," Camacho adds.

"The automotive industry cannot wait anymore for government to make its move while the market suffers," says a specialist from a top industry-monitoring group in the country, a sentiment echoed by the NMPI.

Continues Camacho: "We need to get these products to the market. We believe that the Nissan X-Trail will be able to stimulate the market with its class-leading features, huge interior space and muscular exteriors."

All-Mode 4WD

The Nissan X-Trail will be available in 2.0- and 2.5-liter engines, with 4x2 and 4x4 drivetrains. The four-wheel-drive version features an electronically controlled coupling that reacts faster to the need for torque than conventional hydraulic systems. Known as All-Mode Four Wheel Drive, the system offers a choice of 2WD, 4WD and an auto mode that does the selection duties depending on terrain, speed and torque requirements.

Set on auto, the X-Trail launches off from a stop with power in all four wheels then shifts to two-wheel drive if the system does not detect a need for all-

NISSAN/ B8

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Volvo owners assured of highest car safety standards

IN PURSUIT of car safety, Volvo's research team has spent nearly 30 years studying more than 30,000 real world traffic accidents.

Shortly after Volvo engineers invented the three-point seat belt, which is now an industry standard, Volvo conducted a comprehensive survey aimed at reducing injuries in auto accidents.

This survey, which started way back in 1966, included every accident involving a Volvo in Sweden over a one-year period. The ensuing result revealed that the seat belt has reduced injuries by 50 percent.

Traffic accident research

Realizing the importance of information relating to car accidents, particularly what happens to the automobile and its occupants, Volvo has set up the traffic accident research team in 1970 as an immediate response to the need of developing better ways to protect Volvo passengers from mishaps. The group has been working round-the-clock ever since.

"The need for up-to-date information has not declined over the years, however we have refined our working procedures," says Hans Norin, traffic accident researcher at Volvo Cars.

In-depth studies of individual accidents have proven vital in gaining a broader range of insights about car safety. They reveal the complex mechanisms in different accident types, how the safeguard systems in the cars function, and how the people sitting in the cars receive and respond to injuries. With this information, Volvo Cars engineers can determine valuable priorities in new car development.

Accurate accounts

For example, to attain accurate accounts of what may have happened in an accident, detailed information at the scene of the mishap is gathered and studied by Volvo technicians. When a serious accident, involving a Volvo, occurs within a 60-mile radius of Volvo's home city of Gothenburg, Sweden, the traffic accident research team is alerted via the official emergency switchboard, which is open on a 24-hour working basis.

Volvo Cars responds by immediately sending at least one Volvo technician to the scene. Whenever possible, the police postpones the movement of the vehicles until Volvo technicians arrive. Once on the scene, they conduct a general outline and study by documenting the scene of the accident with measurements and photographs. The police, the witnesses, and if possible, those directly involved are all interviewed.

Afterward, the wreckage is transported to a workshop or to Volvo Cars' Safety Center for further detailed analysis. At the same time, valuable information about the occupants and their injuries is also gathered. The Safety Center staff, the design department, and medical experts then analyze the data.

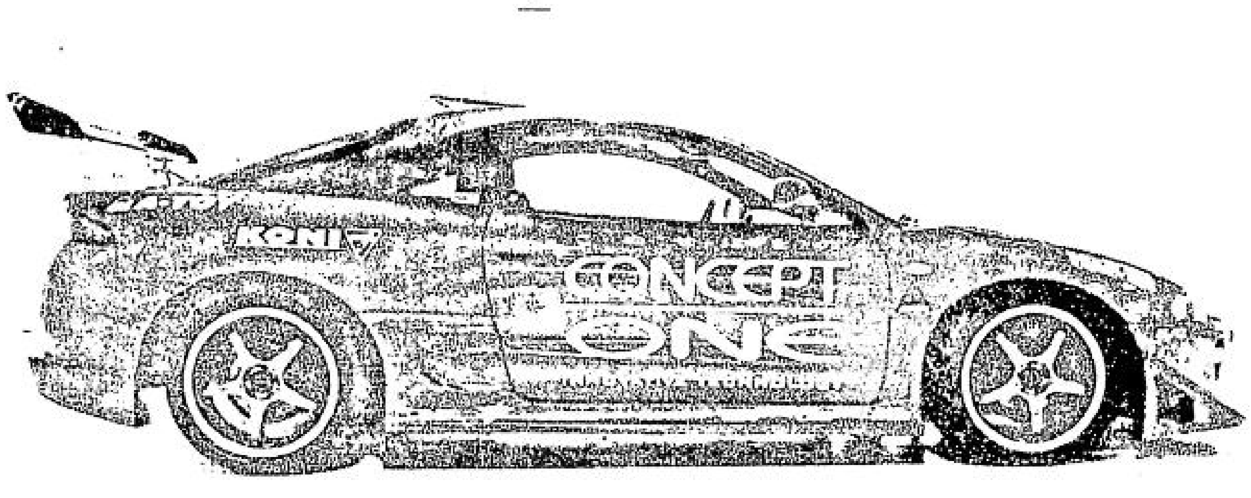
Through various collection procedures, a body of statistical accident data is thereafter established to provide a correlation between the type of injury and the type of accident. The rule of thumb for the traffic accident research team is the more information that can be gathered, put together and analyzed, the better for the engineers to understand the circumstances surrounding a specific accident.

Assurance

"Over years of working on safety, we have become good at communicating—and getting people to listen to—the information that the traffic accident research team generates," says Hans Norin. "Many of the safety systems in Volvo cars have been developed on the basis of these data obtained from real accident studies by the Volvo tragic accident research team."

That is why owners of Volvo in Manila and elsewhere in the world are assured of the best car safety standards whenever they drive around the city in their Volvos.

In Manila, Viking Cars Inc. is the official dealer of Volvo cars. The Volvo Makati office, showroom and Aftersales Service Center are located at 2272 Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City, while Volvo Ortigas Center is located at 88 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. The 2003 Volvo automobile line includes the sporty S60, the flagship S80 luxury sedan, the versatile V70 wagon and rugged Cross Country, and the compact S40 and V40 models. Visit their showrooms and get a chance to win another Volvo or get a 100-percent cash rebate when you join their "Grand Winner Takes Another Raffle!"



THE BLUE 1997 Mitsubishi Eclipse

'Fast and Furious' Eclipse

THE DISPLAY booth of Concept One, the country's hottest aftermarket performance mag wheels, generated the most number of visitors during the recent staging of the Transport Show 2003.

A visual treat for the crowd was the blue 1997 Mitsubishi Eclipse owned by Sidney Ang of Eclipse Works, an exclusive club of Eclipse owners. "Any Eclipse owner can join our club," says Ang, "just call or text 0917-5336456 for details."

Inspired by the film "Fast and the Furious," Eclipse is powered by a 220 hp 4G63 turbo-intercooled engine. The car is wrapped in a specially designed body kit by A-Toy and equipped with an 18-inch Arospeed RSGT mag wheels from Concept One.

Says Ang: "The car's looks, stability and traction are greatly improved due to the wide design of the mag wheels. This mag wheels' design gives the car a more aggressive stance."

For that car show look, visit any of the 100 Concept One dealers nationwide.

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What is a torque converter?

—Macarius Hormillosa of Negros Occidental

THE TORQUE converter is an essential part of any automatic-transmission car.

If you understand manual transmissions, you know that an engine is connected to a transmission by way of a clutch. Without this connection, a car would not be able to come to a complete stop without killing the engine. But cars with an automatic transmission have no clutch that disconnects the transmission from the engine. Instead, they use a device called a torque converter. It got this name because the torque converter converts hydraulic pressure within the transmission to mechanical torque which drives the drive shafts.

Simply put, it is a type of fluid coupling which allows the engine to spin somewhat independently of the transmission; this way, despite the absence of a clutch, the engine can still turn while the wheels and gears in the transmission come to a stop. If the engine is turning slowly, such as when the car is idling at a stoplight, the amount of torque passed through the converter is very small, so keeping the car still requires only a light pressure on the brake pedal. Once you step on the gas, the engine speeds up and pumps more fluid into the torque converter, causing more torque to be transmitted to the wheels.

In addition to the very important job of allowing your car to come to a complete stop without stalling the engine, the torque converter actually gives your car more torque when you accelerate out of a stop. Modern torque converters can multiply the torque of the engine by two to three times. But this effect only happens when the engine is turning much faster than the transmission and not at higher speeds.

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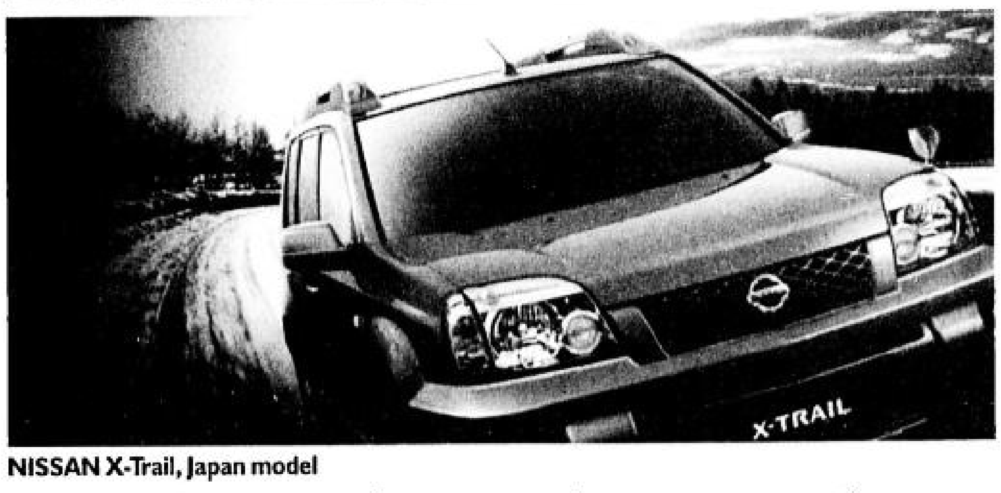


NISSAN X-Trail, Japan model

Nissan to launch X-Trail

From page B7

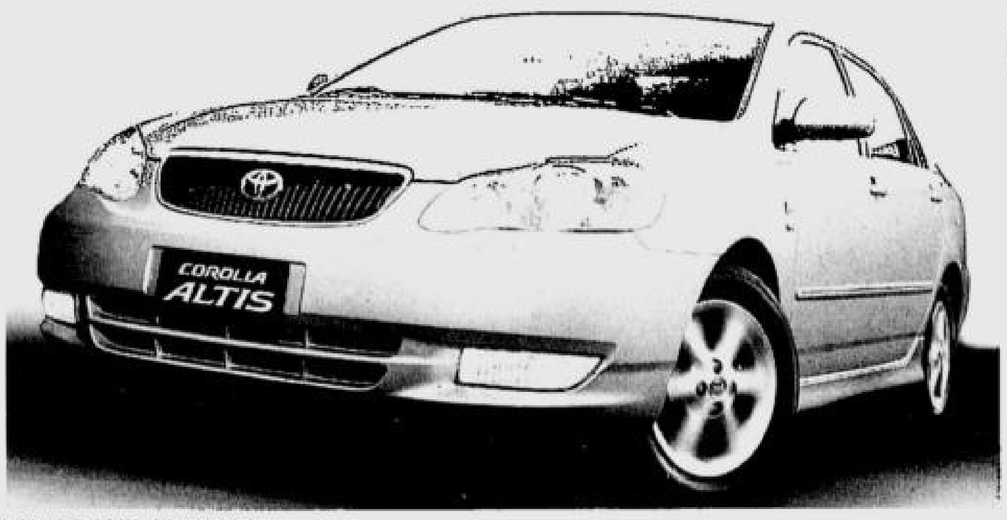
wheel torque. This "no-slip on start-ups" feature gives the X-Trail engaging performance on-road while allowing exciting feats off the asphalt.

The lock mode keeps the engine and the drivetrain sending out torque to all four corners—a necessity when taking on the rough stuff. Only a 4-speed automatic is offered to mate perfectly with the All-Mode Electronic 4x4 System.

Performance

Motivated by an all-new QR2.5 DE gasoline engine, the X-Trail can take on even the most robust M-class sedan with 180 ps on the tap available at 6,000 rpm and 25 kg-m of torque. These performance numbers are way ahead of the competition giving the X-Trail breathtaking acceleration unavailable in other SUVs of its class.

The nearest Nissan dealer can provide more information or process reservations for new Nissan X-Trail starting this month.



THE BRAND-NEW Altis

Altis for P99,000?

TOYOTA Motor Philippines Corp. recently launched a new financing promo for the Corolla Altis featuring low downpayment schemes that are offered for the first time in the market.

For a low P99,000 down payment, customers can drive home any of the Corolla Altis variants starting with the simple 1.6J to the ultra-luxurious 1.8G. This is the lowest down-payment scheme ever offered for the best-selling sedan in the land right now.

Financing promo

Toyota's newest customer promo for the Altis is not the typical low down-payment scheme and low monthly amortization plans usually offered in the market. Instead, Toyota Financial Services has combined both schemes into one financing plan that is simpler and easier for the customer to understand. For a down payment of only P99,000, a customer can purchase any Altis variant with a choice of monthly payments ranging from 12 to 60 months plus low interest rates that go with it.

What also sets this financing promo apart from the usual is the down payment that goes far beyond the usual limit of 20 percent set by other banks or financing companies. Furthermore, these financing plans offer customers savings as high as P172,920 with the assumption that ordinary banks will use the same downpayment plan.

Altis buyers can also opt for low monthly plan for all Corolla Altis variants. Take for example the 1.6J M/T, which can be available for an initial down payment of 40 percent and low monthly amortizations of only P9,372 for 60 months.

Incentive packages

Cash buyers of the Altis, on the other hand, will be treated to different incentive packages ranging from big discounts to free items and accessories during the promo period. Customers can take advantage of the biggest incentive package Toyota has ever offered for the new Altis.

Whether it is financing or cash, all Altis customers are guaranteed to get the simplest, transparent and best value plans from all Toyota authorized dealers.

All Corolla Altis are covered with its "3-year/100,000 km warranty" that assures customers the highest vehicle quality as well as world-class service and genuine parts Toyota is famously regarded for.

Toyota's limited customer financing promo for the Altis is scheduled to run until July 15 only and is duly certified by the Department of Trade and Industry. Details of this campaign as well as Altis display units are available in all authorized Toyota dealers nationwide.

Why this man. . .

From page B7

the car alternator when 20 percent of its capacity is drained) before requiring a recharge.

Most practical use

Marave's company Electromotion Motor Corp. believes the most practical use for electric vehicles is meeting the needs of the mass transport sector and commodities delivery, and maybe even tour transporters.

For over three years now, Electromotion Motor has been busy developing an electric-powered vehicle that won't choke in local conditions. With the help of partner company Francisco Motors Corp., which lent its Anfra body to Marave's group, three vehicles are already up and running.

FMC and Electromotion, furthermore, have plans to form a jointly owned company just to produce and market the electric vehicle, with FMC planning to own 30 percent and Electromotion 70 percent.

Equipped with components of electric cars from the United States, Marave's staff discussed thoroughly their own parameters and type of equipment to be used to produce efficient and affordable electric vehicles. The group came up with two models: the HE and TE, with both possessing modern esthetics, stable structures, and the capacity to carry 6 to 8 passengers comfortably and a payload of 1,200 pounds.

The vehicles are powered by five deep cycle batteries equipped with an onboard battery charger. Recharging time is four hours through your ordinary 220-volt household outlet.

Bolts of inspiration

But the electric car still needs a few bolts of inspiration from Marave's team to get it off and running in the Filipino automotive mainstream. "I admit it is not perfect. The biggest problem of the electric vehicle is its range, since it is only a battery. When you have run from 50 to 60 km, you have to stop and recharge."

This range, Marave says, falls short of local mass transport's requirement. "We've studied the jeepney (trips), which run as long as 120 km a day," he says. Waiting up to four hours for an electric jeepney to be fully charged can be too long a wait for drivers hard-pressed to make the "boundary."

Marave also says the jeepneys his group is making will be given a top speed of 70 kph.

Another problem is the cost. The components alone of an electric vehicle cost about $4,000 (over P200,000). All in all, an entire electric vehicle unit—complete with an Anfra body and Electromotion components—would cost between P450,000 and P550,000.

Engine life

He says, however, that the vehicle is worth every centavo in the long run. The electric vehicle's motor is worry-free for 200,000 km before replacing the carbon brasses, a mere P1,000 part.

And, like your old reliable electric fan, electric motors in vehicles can be a "never-oil" system, thereby freeing drivers and owners from the tedious and messy process of changing oils and overhauls.

Surprisingly, an electric vehicle is about 60 percent heavier than an ordinary vehicle. Much of the weight is attributed to the five onboard batteries, which contain lead acid. Thus, an electric engine cannot be merely transplanted into an ordinary vehicle body. The suspension system needs to be modified.

To solve the problem of range, Electromotion has hired a technical assistant from the Mapua Institute of Technology.

Not receptive to new ideas

The greatest obstacle, however, could be Filipinos themselves, who, Marave thinks, are by nature not receptive to new ideas.

I was able to test-drive Marave's electric vehicle briefly around the INQUIRER offices. The engine came to life without a sound.

Though there was that unfamiliar absence of the radiator, fan belts and all other components essential to internal combustion engines, all the five basic parts of an electric vehicle were there—the motor, controller, battery, battery charger and the converter.

The vehicle still possesses the usual manual gear shift. But I still had to reorient my driving habits a bit. As opposed to regular vehicles that needed "mixing" between the clutch and accelerator when put into gear, the electric vehicle we tested required me to completely release my foot from the clutch before stepping on the gas, rather, the accelerator.

And unlike internal combustion engines, the electric motor loves high rpms. Marave says the electric motor ran more efficiently and effortlessly at high engine revolutions. The dashboard had unfamiliar gauges as well, such as a volt and amp meter.

I noticed that when I drove faster, the volt meter increased, while the amp meter decreased.

Marave says the torque achieves maximum at zero rpm, thus climbing steep slopes is no sweat for the electric vehicle.

Another shocker

As I drove on, Marave reveals another "shocking" revelation: all the world's remaining oil supplies would last us only another 70 years.

He explains that fossil fuels, the raw material of petroleum, took an excruciatingly long time (think in terms of tens of millions of years) to become its present state. Obviously, Marave says, humans were consuming oil much, much faster than the Earth could turn dead animals and plants into fossil fuels.

What would happen to all those gas stations, in case electric vehicles become popular? Marave says recharging stations could be set up in all the existing gas stations. Or, more radically, rent-a-car stations could be set up wherein the only cars for hire are all electric-powered.

Owners of such stations need not worry about their cars being stolen, considering that after 60 km the car turns "dead."

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Marave says, has taken interest and initially intends a pilot project in Makati to be started.

Should a driver of an electric vehicle worry when he or she is driving through a thunderstorm? Marave stresses that should be the least of the driver's concerns. He says drivers, instead, should be vigilant of loose wires. Any loose connection, just like in any electrical appliance, causes a shutdown.

He stresses, however, that Electromotion's wirings were considered superior.

Flood wouldn't be a problem, he adds. Marave says Electromotion develops "splash-proof" sealed motors.

And electricity need not run on four wheels. Marave is planning to produce electric motorcycles and is eyeing a joint venture with Peugeot, which Marave considers the biggest manufacturer of electric vehicles in the world.

Aside from reducing further the cost without losing efficiency and reliability of electric vehicles and increasing the battery range, Electromotion plans to set up an assembly plant capable of producing 100 units of either HE and TE models in a month, import the power and electric components and keep reasonable stock inventory level that would ensure no idling of assembly lines. It needs P100 million for the first three months of operation.

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FRONTIER

SHIFT_the future NISSAN

Hyundai signs partnership pact with European football group

HYUNDAI Motor Co. has recently renewed its partnership with Union des Associations Europeennes de Football (UEFA) and will serve as the official partner (in the automotive category) of UEFA Euro 2004 to be held in Portugal.

As the official automotive partner of UEFA Euro 2004, HMC will provide official cars to ensure a smooth and efficient operation of transportation and logistics. The fleet will be mainly used by teams, referees, media representatives, UEFA delegations and by the members of Euro 2004 SA—a joint venture that was set up for the organization of the competition. Hyundai also sponsored the UEFA Euro 2000 and the 2002 Fifa (Federation International de Football Association) World Cup.

Said HMC president and CEO Dong-Jin Kim: "It is an extraordinary privilege for Hyundai Motor to strengthen its partnership with UEFA by sponsoring Euro 2004. I am very pleased and proud that we are supporting this sport event, one of the most popular in the world. Football nowadays is a universally understood language and a powerful unifying force that can pull people of all nationalities, races and creeds together. This coincides with Hyundai's values and vision."

By sponsoring national and international football tournaments, HMC has not only infused a new sense of fun and excitement into the game, but it has also achieved significant increases in brand awareness and improvements in brand image. By renewing its partnership with UEFA and Fifa, HMC has secured a firm foundation that will enable it to push its sports marketing strategy forward to gain a better foothold in the European market.

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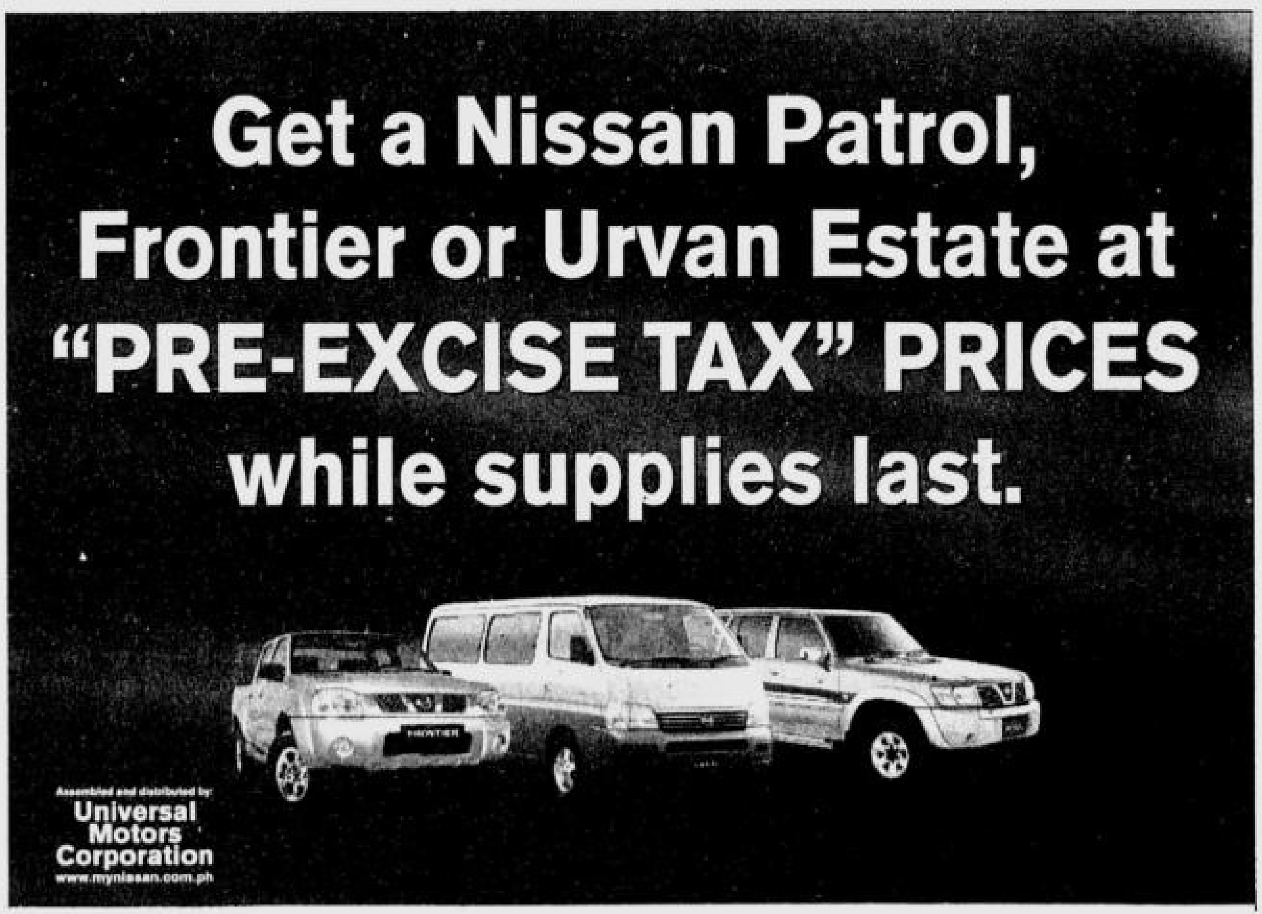
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Classic Beetle bids goodbye

Text and photo by Charles E. Buban

HOLDING on to the last few units of the classic Beetle, Manzana is thankful to be part of a mania that spans seven decades.

THE CAR that charmed the world for almost seven decades is finally driving off into the sunset.

After selling a total of 22 million units worldwide, German manufacturer Volkswagen announced that starting July this year it will no longer produce the classic Beetle in its Puebla, Mexico assembly plant, the last remaining place where this legendary car is still manufactured.

"It's sad, but all good things must come to an end," said Webin Dy Manzana, general manager of Hancars AutoCenter, the only importer of brand-new classic Beetle here in the country.

And with the announcement, the classic Beetle has just become even more valuable. "It's a collector's item already and in fact, I'm having second thoughts of selling my last remaining two units here," Manzana said.

"I'm just glad to be part of the Beetlemania, a car that has symbolized the hippie era of the '70s," he added.

1979 copies

The classic Beetles Manzana imported from Mexico were virtual copies of the 1979 classic Beetle manufactured in Emden, Germany, with its trademark air-cooled rear-mounted engine.

But there are slight changes from its '70s counterpart to conform with today's trends. These include "the removal of chrome trims and introduction of body-colored bumpers plus the installation of modern amenities like an electronic immobilizer with digital key, a CD player, factory-installed air-conditioning system, anti-theft alarm system, a new dashboard and interior design," Manzana enumerated.

Improvements were also made on the inside of today's classic Beetles: a 1.6-liter 4-cylinder Flat Four Multipoint Injection EFI engine (which runs on unleaded gasoline), 3-way catalytic converter, US standard fuel system and a 4-speed manual transmission with overdrive.

Farewell edition

Manzana also announced that the Mexico plant will be offering a farewell edition of the classic Beetle and aptly called it "Ultima Edicion."

"Ultima Edicion" will come in two retro colors—aquarius blue (light blue) and moon beige (khaki) and will feature chrome moldings, white side wall tires, body-colored wheels, "Ultima Edicion" emblem, Volksburg emblem, a special chassis number, original stereo and a lot more.

"They will only make 3,000 of these 'Ultima Edicion' and right now some 60 percent were already sold worldwide," informed Manzana.

He also added that interested buyers may place their order at Hancars AutoCenter on Quezon Avenue.

Said Manzana: "But first, the buyer will have to produce a letter of intent to buy the 'Ultima Edicion,' to which I will fax to the Mexico plant. You see, they only want to sell the unit to classic Beetle aficionados."

Manzana informed that the Mexico plant will charge an additional $2,000 to $2,500 to the unit, which means it may cost between P820,000 and 850,000 here.

Designed by Porsche

The roots of the Volkswagen date back to 1912 when Dr. Ferdinand Porsche (famous for designing the Porsche sports car) designed a horizontally opposed four-cylinder aircraft engine that bore a remarkable similarity to the Beetle's powerplant.

But the classic Beetle saga doesn't really begin, however, until 1931, when Porsche was granted an assignment from Zundapp, a German motorcycle manufacturer that was contemplating on entering the automobile business.

Porsche's idea of a mass-produced vehicle that was affordable to the average German was also shared by another: Adolf Hitler, who conceived the idea of the classic Beetle in 1934.

In fact, he sketched his ideal shape for the Volkswagen car and said "it should look like a beetle. You need only observe nature to know how to achieve streamlining."

Strange name

The classic Beetle was then known as Kraft durch Freude-wagen (or KdF-wagen for short), which literally translates to "Joy through Strength" car, a strange name derived from Hitler's favorite motto.

By 1939, only 210 KdF-wagen were produced as World War II erupted.

The car didn't go on sale to the public until 1947, and that same year Volkswagen signed its first export contract with a firm in the Netherlands.

It was the start of what would be millions of units in exports. Finally, after hiring Heinrich Nordoff as managing director in 1948, the British (who controlled parts of Germany after the war) relinquished control of Volkswagen the following year, and the company was free to pursue its own destiny.

This was just the beginning for the classic Beetle's international trip to fame.

Growing reputation

During the 1960s and early 1970s, although the car was getting outdated, American exports, innovative advertising and a growing reputation for reliability helped production figures to surpass the levels of the previous record holder, the Ford Model T and by 1973 total production was over 16 million.

At its peak in the late 1960s, Volkswagen sold some 500,000 Beetles per year in the US alone.

Ever since Volkswagen closed its assembly line for the classic Beetle in Germany—Wolfburg in 1974 and Emden in 1978—the Mexico factory continued the production, making about 40,000 units a year.

Facing the future in transport, mobility

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

MARSEILLES, FRANCE—Representatives of more than 50 automobile clubs all over the world are gathered here for the 42nd weeklong conference of the Federation International de l'Automobile (FIA) and the Alliance Internationale de Tourisme (AIT) on the theme, "Facing the Future." (FIA, by the way, is the organization that sets the rules for all motor sports worldwide, including Formula One racing.)

The Philippines is represented by four directors of Automobile Association Philippines (AAP, formerly Philippine Motor Association) in this conference hosted by the French automobile clubs, but conducted in English.

Judging from what was said at the Marketing Commission's session on the first day, environmental issues, consumer protection and public policy will play a bigger role in the agenda of auto clubs. As Dr. Karl Obermair of ADAC (Allemeine Deutsche Automobil Club), the largest auto club in Europe said, auto clubs are not only about member services such as round-the-clock roadside assistance, tourist and travel information and services, car insurance, driver's license and car registration renewal services. They should exert greater effort to get their activities in line with the expectation of members that their auto club will do all it can to guarantee their safety and protect their consumer rights. For example, when a series of bus accidents happened in Germany, ADAC promptly announced it would test the safety of passenger buses, an initiative that was welcomed by members as well as the commuting public.

ADAC aims to sharpen its image as the No. 1 consumer protection/public policy organization in Germany. Last January, Germany's Ministry of Justice recognized ADAC as a consumer protection organization.

Following this mandate, ADAC conducts crash testing, tires and accessories testing, repair shop testing and ecology testing. In the latter, ADAC measures the emissions of various makes and models to find out which are the cleanest-running cars in the European market.

ADAC's tourism services not only consist of handing out road maps and travel advice, but also tests to rate bathing water quality at resorts, road tolls and charges abroad and tourism facilities for the disabled.

ADAC also plays a major role in the Euro test program that involves testing the safety standards of tunnels, motorway service areas, ferries and bus services.

Given the advanced levels of technology and economic development in Europe, not every idea or project presented in the FIA-AIT conference can be used or adapted in a Third World country like ours.

But it opens our eyes to the potential of a national auto club like AAP to develop and strengthen ways to protect not only the motoring public, but also consumers and the environment.

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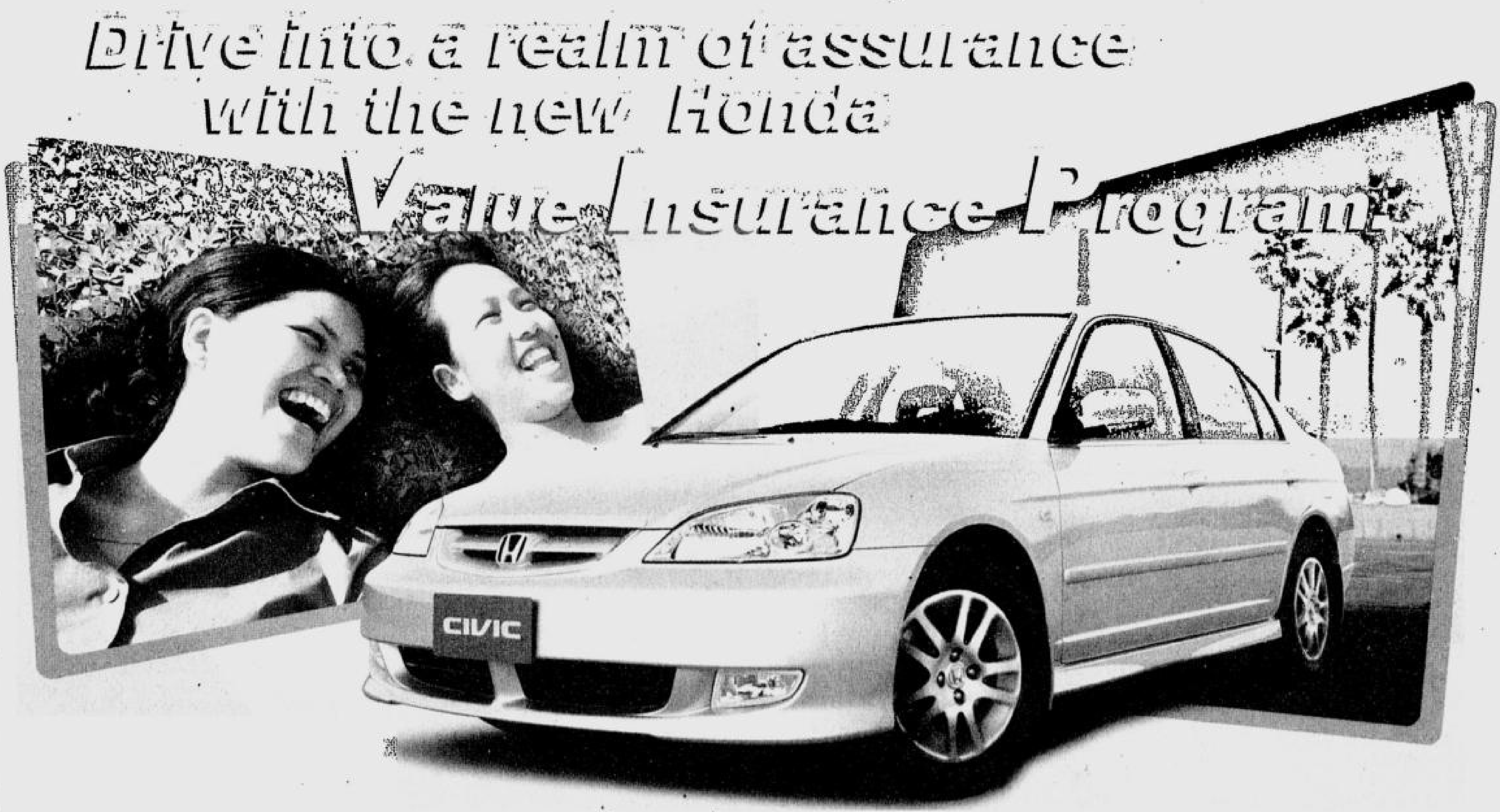

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The new Volvo; Isuzu breakthrough in Vietnam

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

HAVE you heard of the Volvo Cross Country?

A great vehicle. Its look is a virtual departure from the traditional box-like Volvo design.

Not only that. It's the only vehicle hereabouts that tells you of the actual load of fuel in your tank. It's there in the monitor, beside the speedometer—"190 kilometers from an empty tank." That's your fuel gauge right there. That reading is one-fourth of the tank's full capacity. No flashing red light to warn you of an impending empty tank. And wow, this one has a built-in telephone below the dashboard. Who needs a cell phone?

As usual, this Volvo has a constant ring to remind you to wear your seat belt. It stops only when you finally fasten your seat belt.

Because it is an all-wheel drive (AWD), it's top-class as usual when it comes to maneuverability even on slippery, wet roads. The use of the four wheels vary, too, depending on the conditions. It can be 95 percent front and 5 percent rear during normal driving conditions, or vice versa via a "viscous clutch." This clutch has a locking system to automatically transfer power to the rear wheels when the car is put into reverse—becoming an all-wheel-drive in reverse!

The new Volvo, also known as the XC 2.4L with a transverse 5-cylinders, has a system that features the four-wheel Traction Control System (Tracs), which means that if the wheels on the right-hand side of the car start to slip, these wheels are braked and the left-handed wheels help to propel the car forward. Tracs intervenes in an extremely balanced fashion and is activated automatically from starting and up to speeds of about 80 kph.

With the Volvo Cross Country, accelerating is no problem. You can pull away on a wet surface the same way that you do it on a dry surface—done, as usual, without any danger of turning turtle.

As usual, the AWD and Tracs are testament to Volvo's worldwide reputation as the world's safest car.

Incidentally, Volvo has put up a smashing promo that allows you to win any of Volvo's models like its flagship S80 luxury sedan, V70 wagon, S40 and V40 models or the Cross Country. (How I envy Bonjin Bolinao, who already owns one of those.) Visit Volvo's show rooms on Chino Roces, Makati City or ADB Avenue, Ortigas (Pasig City). The promo includes a 100 percent cash rebate to the winner of the "Volvo Grand Winner Takes Another Raffle" gig.

Again, if only I could win the lotto, Bonjin will have company.

* * *

Do you know that Isuzu Philippines Corp. currently exports locally made parts of the popular Crosswind XTO to Vietnam?

The records show that Vietnam's GNP has now become one of the fastest in terms of growth rate in Asia. The country, once ravaged by war brought on by America's penchant for world domination through military conquests, has also now become one of Asia's top markets for automobiles, beaten only by the likes of giant China.

* * *

The Isuzu breakthrough is a brainchild of Toru Koyasu, that man of modest mien whose drive for excellence is legend in the automotive industry.

> The Volvo Cross Country's look is a virtual departure from the traditional box-like Volvo design

The IPC president has started shipping semi-knocked down (SKD) body and parts for completely knocked down (CKD) units starting last February and the move has been drawing raves from Vietnam's automotive experts. The target is 1,000 units of CKD parts to be exported annually.

"This is a good start to penetrate the market in Indo-China," said Koyasu-san, who described the Crosswind as "the only turbocharged diesel in its class with a sleek aerodynamic design and upscale exterior styling."

As for the exports of both SKD and CKD parts to Vietnam, senior manager Joseph Bautista said: "We are expecting the demand to grow in three years. This is the same reason that Isuzu Vietnam has invested a substantial capital in their assembly facilities for the Crosswind."

Soon to follow in Vietnam is the XUV, Crosswind's sporty version.

* * *

I congratulate Honda for holding its 6th edition of the Honda Media Golf Invitational on Monday at the Manila Golf Club inside Forbes Park.

How time flies.

The tournament was just a wild idea I tossed to Arnel Doria, who wasn't even playing golf back then. Some six years ago, I told him to pick up the game because, "It's the best game ever invented by man."

* * *

Before I knew it, Arnel was playing the game already. He started playing it with Ray Butch "Elvis" Gamboa and Ron delos Reyes, the two greatest television personalities when it comes to motoring this side of the globe.

Unfortunately, Elvis the Pelvis didn't pursue the game with as much passion as Arnel and Ron did. Could be that the game interfered with his passion of a lifetime—doing Elvis' gyrations? Maybe, the weight shift in golf would seemingly contradict Elvis' pelvis moves?

Anyway, here's a glass once more to Takano-san and Takahashi-san, the 1-2 punch of Honda, who displayed contrasting talents during the Honda golf event. Arnel's Angels (Min Magbal, Tintin Reyes and Dansel Palma) had played their hosting job to the hilt as usual, including Arnel's additions Pam, Sheryl and Kaye.

Takano-san, the Honda president, is a beginner and so, he just kept whacking away at the bedimpled ball like a boy enjoying a newly received toy.

"Did you enjoy your game?" he asked me after the round.

I said I did.

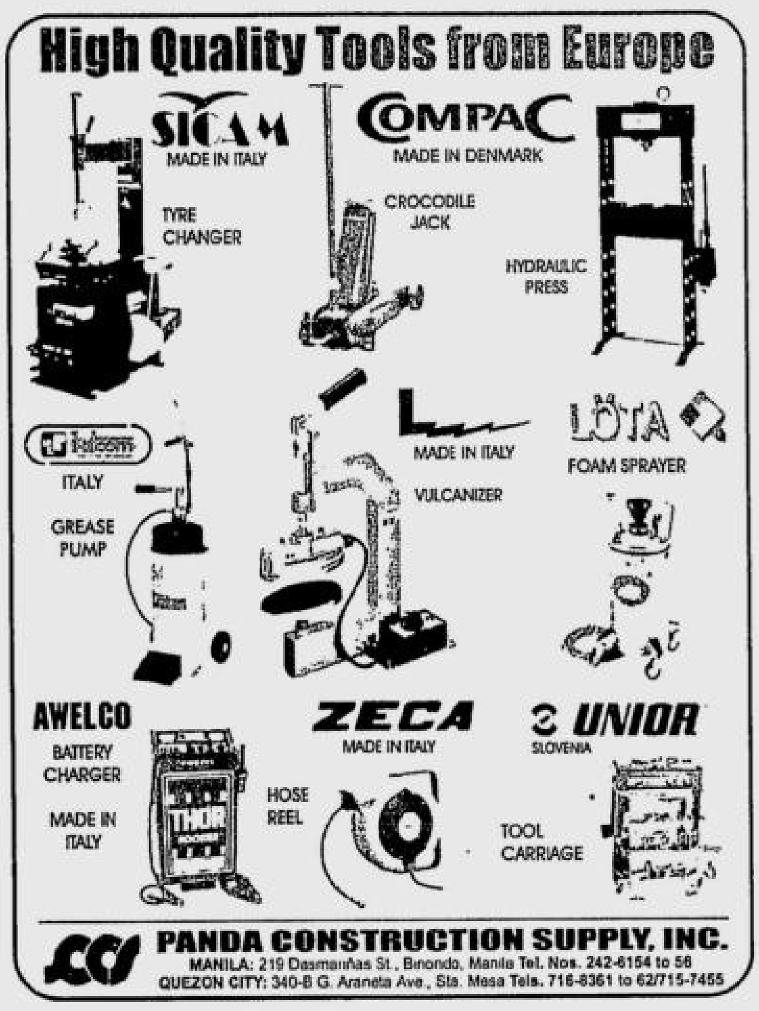
"Me? I also enjoyed playing but I'm not dropping basketball, which is really my game," said Takano-san, who is a dead shot from afar according to Arnel D, considered as Honda's most efficient trouble-shooter for years now.

Takahashi-san was different. An 18-handicapper, he would address each shot with the seriousness of a Tiger Woods. Boy, can he hit! His tee shots boomed like Tiger's.

Here's looking forward to playing with you again next, year, fellas. Arigato!

* * *

QUOTE ME. Once again, here's my ABC in driving—ABC as in "Alang Busina Compare." In English, "Use the brake, not the horn."



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Cojuangco keen on buying into ABC-5

COJUANGCO

By Doris C. Dumlao

BUSINESSMAN Antonio "Tonyboy" Cojuangco is making a pitch for Associated Broadcasting Co. (ABC-5) and BusinessWorld Publishing Corp.

Industry sources said Cojuangco was pursuing separate buy-in deals involving ABC-5 and the only business newspaper in the country.

The sources said Cojuangco, chair of dominant carrier Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., had made a firm offer to acquire shares of these companies.

They said the Zoe channel had been offered to Cojuangco but the PLDT chair was more interested in ABC-5 because of its "good valuation."

"He has a lot of cash. He still has money from the sale of his PLDT shares years ago and he's looking for good investments," one of the sources said.

The sources estimated that a deal for a controlling stake in ABC-5, a major local channel, could cost about P4 billion.

The acquisition of a local content provider like ABC-5 is expected to complement Cojuangco's satellite TV business—Dream Broadcasting Corp.

ABC-5 was first granted a congressional franchise under Republic Act 2945 in 1960. It operated as a radio and television network from 1960 until 1972 when it was shut down when Martial Law was declared.

After the fall of the Marcos regime, the television network was revived. It broke ground in its new headquarters in Novaliches, Quezon City in 1990 under a group of new stockholders led by broadcast veteran Edward Tan. It resumed commercial operations in 1992 and acquired a new franchise to operate in 1994.

At present, ABC-5 has 15 stations and over 100 cable TV affiliates nationwide.

The sources said Cojuangco had also made an offer to take over BusinessWorld after the death of founder Raul Locsin, but to succeed in his bid, he must address the employees' right of first refusal.

It is not clear, however, which media business Cojuangco will prioritize in his takeover bid.

ADB scales down growth target for RP

By Michelle V. Remo

THE ASIAN Development Bank said it had lowered its full-year economic growth projection for the country from 4 percent to 3.2-3.8 percent mainly due to the possible effects of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

Although the country showed resilience in dealing with the direct impact of the SARS outbreak on the economy, its global effects would likely cause a slowdown in its trade performance, it said.

The ADB cited the eroding capability of the country to attract foreign investments as another reason for the downgrade in the growth outlook.

The country faces the challenge of addressing perceptions that the economy is becoming less competitive and that it provides a less attractive destination for investments, ADB country director Thomas Crouch said in yesterday's press briefing.

Crouch said the decline in the country's ranking in theWorld Economic Forum's competitiveness rating, and the downgrading of its long-term credit rating by Fitch Ratings, Moody's Investor Service and Standard & Poor's were indications of the prevailing sentiments on the Philippines.

Crouch said the Supreme Court's decision to cancel the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal-3 contract and to require Meralco to refund excess charges were among those that were driving away foreign investors from the country.

Crouch also raised concerns over the country's widening fiscal gap saying this raised doubts about the government's ability to manage the economy.

The ADB said it had been keeping a close watch on the country's debt stock. It, however, took positive note of the improvement in the government's budget management performance, with the gap in the early part of the year kept within the ceiling.

Crouch suggested that the government should enhance its revenue collection efforts instead of reducing spending. "Instead of adjusting tax rates, the government should adopt a more systemic reform in revenue collection," he added.

Tougher law on LPG trade sought

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TOTAL Philippines yesterday said its liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) unit was losing P165 million in revenues to illegal LPG refillers.

The company urged Congress to pass a law that would impose stiffer penalties on illegal players in the LPG industry.

Roberto Leandro Velasquez, Total's LPG manager, said illegally refilled Total cylinders were eating up on the company's market.

"Refillers and retailers who usurp our Superkalan cylinders (which come in 2.7-kilogram tanks) take away half of our small-cylinder market," Velasquez said.

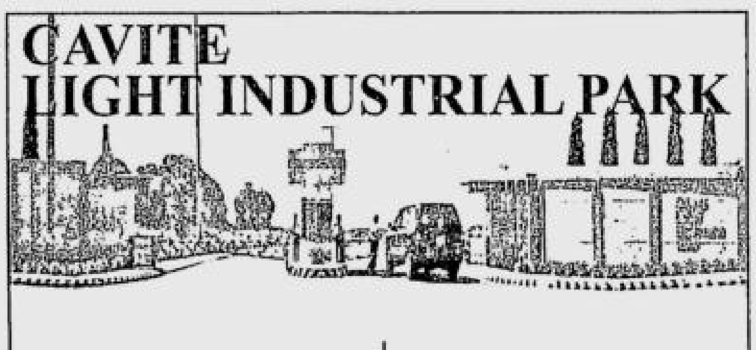
The official said this meant about 6.5 million kilograms of Superkalan sales or 250,000 refills accounting for some P17.5 million lost to errant refillers and retailers each month.

For the 11-kg Totalgaz brand, Velazquez said the company was losing 220,000 kg or 20,000 refills at about P4.4 million each month.

He said Total held a 7.2-percent share of the overall domestic LPG market.

Velasquez said combined efforts made by the Department of Energy and the LPG Industry Association—through the LPG Task Force—were not so effective as the current inspection and penalty system was not stiff enough.

Last week, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. said it was losing about P500 million a year due to the illegal refilling of its Shellane cylinders.



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ATI to issue ₱500M worth of 3-, 5-year notes

ASIAN Terminals Inc. (ATI) yesterday signed the agreement for the second tranche of its fixed and floating rate notes issuance amounting to P500 million.

Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) is the arranger, facility agent, registrar and paying agent, and investor of ATI's fixed and floating rate notes issuance. The notes will have maturity of three and five years.

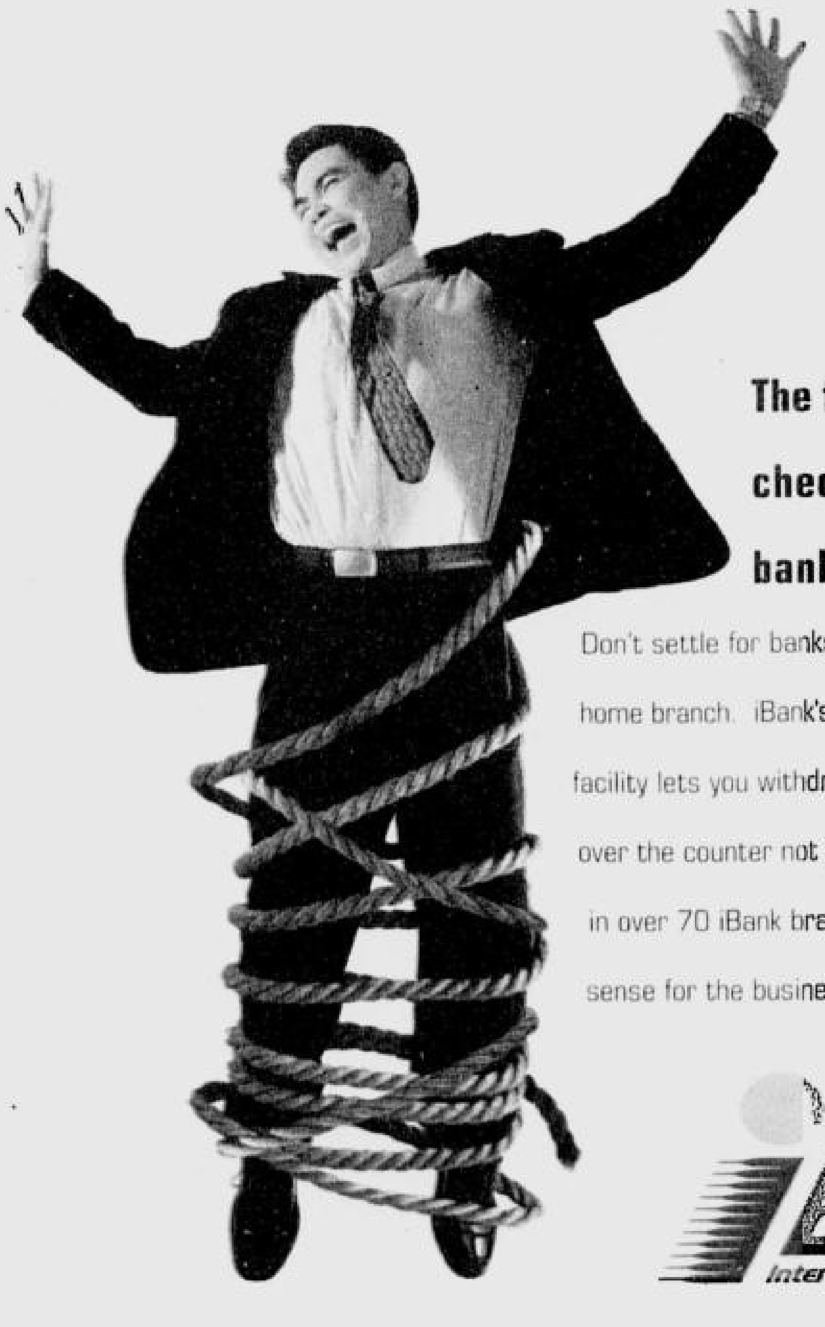
The other investors are Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. (MBTC)-TBG as trustee, and Land Bank of the Philippines.

Proceeds of the notes issue will be used for the ongoing capital expenditure program of ATI, including the South Harbor Development Program, and for the refinancing of more expensive debts. The South Harbor project, which is linked to demand, includes the modernization and capacity building of the facilities for international container and general cargo handling.

In December 2002, SCB also arranged the P1.3 billion worth of fixed and floating rate notes with maturity of three, five and 10 years. Investors included Sunlife of Canada (Phils.) Inc., Sunlife of Canada Prosperity Bond Fund, Inc., Insular Life Assurance Co., Ltd., Security Bank Corp., Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. -TBG as trustee and Robinsons Savings Bank.

ATI renders handling services for the country's imports and export cargoes at international ports in Manila, Batangas, Mariveles, and General Santos City.

The company has reported a 25-percent increase in its 2002 net income to P641 million on revenues of P3.52 billion, which is 11 percent higher than the P3.17 billion in the previous year.



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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Too posh to be a cafeteria

That's Sari-Sari in Eastwood, but it sure has the informality and the spunk to be inventive

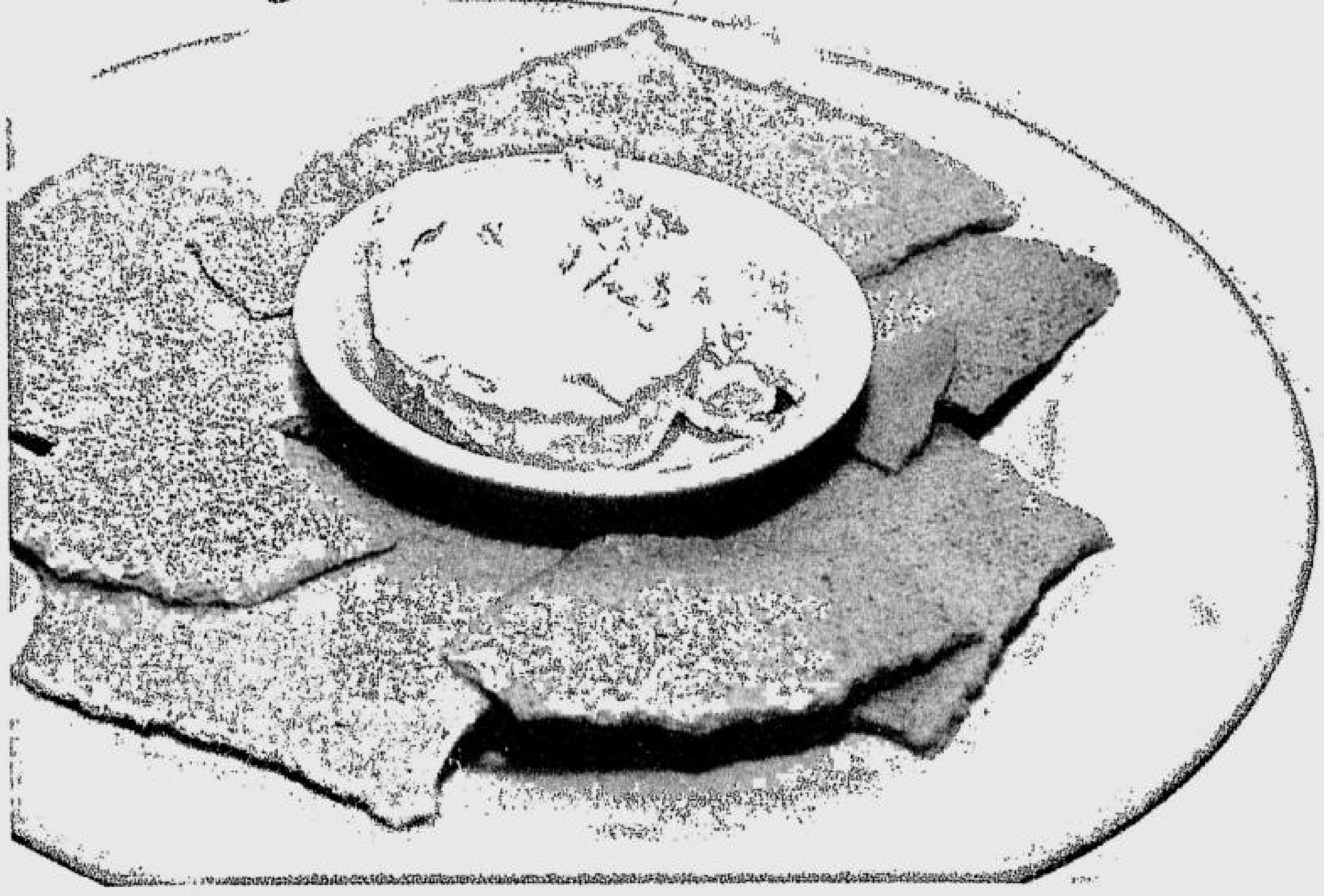
Text by Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Johnny Villena

TUCKED away in Eastwood City is Sari-Sari Cafeteria, one of the newest players in the culinary arena. Its cuisine is a blending of the best in local ingredients and an Asian approach—modern Pinoy, if you will.

In fact, owner-chef Aleth Ocampo Mapa has added touches of sophistication to many Filipino favorites. "There are plenty of dishes we grew up with that can be presented in more exciting ways," she says.

Mapa herself has successfully transformed many traditional food items into more interesting ones.

For instance, she has found a witty way to serve the creamy and crunchy Sans Rival. Instead of serving it in its usual "layered form," she offers crisp meringue chips with chopped cashew nuts separately with butter cream sauce on the side.



SANS RIVAL Crumbs

Kitchen duty

Mapa comes from a Pampango family of good cooks (why does that sound redundant?). When the idea of putting up a café within the popular Sari-Sari boutique came up three years back, Mapa knew she was up for the challenge to handle the kitchen.

As part-owner of Sari-Sari boutique with cousins Marni Ocampo, Anna Sarmiento and Margie Ocampo, Mapa used to handle the finance department , but the idea of having a café inside the shop got her excited.

The younger sister of noted historian and INQUIRER columnist Ambeth Ocampo, Mapa soon took over the small kitchen of Sari-Sari at the Rockwell Power Plant and, eventually, Sari-Sari at Glorietta 3. Since she didn't have formal lessons in the culinary field and relied only on her innate cooking skills, she enrolled at Gene Gonzales' Center for Asian Culinary Studies.

"The Center opened my eyes to so many things, especially in terms of running the kitchen," says Mapa. "I learned that working with food is such a personal thing, and it has to come from within."

Sari-Sari Cafeteria in Eastwood City is the first free-standing food outlet of the Sari-Sari boutique. "The Eastwood outlet has become our main commissary. We do our kitchen testing here. All the dishes that are successfully prepared here are eventually served in other outlets. We decided to put up a bigger food outlet to give our clients more selections. We have long wanted to have a place where our clients can eat comfortably, relax and even chill out," says Mapa.

LONGGANISA'T Bawang-Hamonado Spaghettini

Chic place

Designed by Mapa's artist-husband Jojo, Sari-Sari Cafeteria is a chic dining place ideal for parties of two or more. One can either choose a cozy table next to the bar or enjoy dining al fresco, a bonus setting for most restaurants in Eastwood City.

The four-month-old restaurant has an exceptional take on interiors. It uses wood in all its warmth and splendor. Carefully chosen furniture consists of unpretentious wooden chairs painted in solid black with soft cushioned seats and marble in-laid tables adorned with anthuriums and candles. The walls are set in white hues accented only with two large mirrors with thick wooden borders. The mirrors are made to look and feel larger by placing them opposite each other. An oversized glass-top table decked with wines and Danesi products, situated at the center of the room,

TOO/ C2

Creative Cooking
2003 Culinary Series
July Calendar

SPANISH
Don Alba of *Alba Restaurante Espanol*, no less, shares his culinary passion and secrets to making the best paella, lengua, gambas and more.

Recipes: Ensalada Mediterranea, Paella Valenciana, Sopa de Mariscos, Ensalada Valenciana, Entremeses Variados, Paella Negra, Gambas Al Ajillo, Salpicado de Solomillo and Lengua Sevillana.

July 15 & 22, 2003, 2-5 p.m., P2900 (for 2 days)

ITALIAN
Learn how to do homemade pasta, risotto, pesto and other Italian favorites with Chef Nick Anderson of *Café Provençal*

Recipes: Homemade Fettuccine al Pesto, Lasagne al Forno, Caprisieuse Pizza, Pork Piccata Napolitana, Crema Limone, Spinach Ravioli, Parma Ham Focaccia, Risotto al Funghi, and Osso Buco

July 16 & 23, 2003, 2-5 p.m. P2900 (for 2 days)

JAPANESE
Chef Seiji Kamura of *Juan Miro*, *Kasei*, and *Seiji* restaurants demonstrates how you can make your favorite Japanese dishes at home the authentic way.

Recipes: Sushi (Ebi,Tuna, Tamago, California Maki), Yaki Udon, Tempura, Chicken & Gindara Teriyaki, Sukiyaki, Katsudon, Kani Salad, Gomoku-Kamameshi, Tofu Steak, Yakitori, Japanese Fried Rice

July 17, 24 & 31 2003, 2-5 p.m. P3,900 (for 3 days)

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ASSORTED Terra Chips with Tinapa Pâté and Eggplant Dip

KINAMATISANG Baboy

YAM Meringue with Sabayon Sauce

DINING al fresco at Sari-Sari Cafeteria in Eastwood City

Too posh to be a cafeteria

From page C1

serves as the main attraction.

Sari-Sari, however, does not have that stifling air of overdone interiors. "We wanted to create a clean, uncluttered look with warmth," says Mapa.

Having a seating capacity of 20 (plus 40 outside seating), the place is good for intimate dinners, with its dim lights, iridescent candles and minimalist arrangement.

Food pleasure

Mapa has designed a menu so diverse you won't know where to start. But start you must with the *pica-pica*, suggests Mapa.

The Assorted Terra Chips with Tinapa Pâté and Eggplant Dip (P90) tops the *pica-pica* list. *Kamote* (purple and yellow yam) and *gabi* (yellow taro) are thinly sliced, air-dried and fried to perfection. Mapa has created a gourmet dip out of *tinapa* (smoked fish) and eggplant—to go with the chips. But, if you like your appetizer heavy and filling, go for Fried Kalabaw Wings with 100 Islands Dressing (P120) and Pugo Eggs in Bacon (P80). Or, better yet, try Fresh Lumpiang Ubod with Coriander Sambal (three pieces per order, P120). The *lumpia* has diced pork, shrimp and fresh *ubod* wrapped in pandan-infused pouches served with sweet and spicy sauce.

Best-selling soup of the house is none other than the Kinamatisang Baboy (P130), which is a Kapampangan specialty made of pork pieces stewed in tomatoes, onions, garlic and tasty broth topped with shredded pechay greens. It's actually a meal in itself.

Light eaters will also find a full meal in any of Sari-Sari's pasta dish. The Longganisa't Bawang Vigan (P130) pasta is another Mapa reinvention. Instead of serving the *longganisa* with rice, Mapa thought of mixing the garlicky *longganisa* with spaghetti noodles and a dash of herbs and spices.

Pestong Pinoy (P115) is Sari-Sari's version of the classic Italian sauce served with asparagus spears and enoki mushrooms. Another indulgence in the house is the Taba ng Talangka with Grilled Quesong Puti (P120), an old family recipe. "The pure fat from baby crabs is sautéed in garlic and seasoned with lemon juice, topped with grilled white cheese," says Mapa.

The familiar Chicken Afritada is sautéed here in olive oil and capsicum sauce and served with baby potatoes, carrots and sweet potatoes (P140). Other choices include Bangus Belly (P145), Lechon Kawali with mixed spiced pepper jelly (P140) and Kare-Kareng Baboy.

A worthy cap to a wonderful meal is the melt-in-your-mouth Dalandan Rhum Cake (P70), which is spiked with poppy seeds and served warm topped with rum sauce. But, if you'd rather go for something truly sinful, there is Yam Meringue (P75), light and fluffy meringue balls (much like *canonigo*) covered with sabayon sauce and spiked with dark rum.

Like the boutique Sari-Sari, the cafeteria keeps to a rather low-key image. But one sip of its Iced Tea with Lemon Grass and you'll realize there's a lot of oomph in there.

Sari-Sari Cafeteria (tel. 421-7610), located in Eastwood City, Libis, QC, is open 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and 5 p.m.-2 a.m.

E-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph.

CHICKEN Afritada with Olive Oil and Capsicum Sauce

SARI-SARI Cafeteria owner-chef Aleth Ocampo Mapa

SARI-SARI uses wood in all its warmth and splendor.

Specialty coffee shop in gas stations

CALTEX Philippines Inc. is opening specialty shops inside the Star Mart outlets of its service stations.

The first café opened at the Star Mart outlet located at the corner of Wilson Street and Ortigas Avenue in San Juan City. The next two will open at the outlets in Boni Avenue, Mandaluyong City, and Filinvest, Alabang.

"We see ourselves as long-range partners in providing the services that people are telling us they want," said Mentz Deguito, Caltex general manager for retail.

Deguito noted that the Philippine market shows great potential for such a concept, as cafés have become a favorite hangout of many people.

"Caltex is very optimistic about the Philippine market. In fact, we plan to open more cafés at company-owned, company-operated service stations. We are targeting around 20 to 30 cafés all over the Philippines by the end of the year," he said.

The café at Star Mart has a lounging area provided with couches and tables to allow customers to sit down, enjoy their snacks and relax.

"Unlike the coffee served at most gasoline outlets, the Star Mart café offers better-tasting coffee, smoothies and other beverages and specialty snacks," said Roy Macapagal, team leader for Caltex Rapid Format Deployment—Coffee Project. "The coffee beans are sourced locally, as we have excellent beans here in the Philippines."

The Star Mart coffee shops are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Their launch is in keeping with the global marketing strategies of ChevronTexaco, the US-based energy company of which CPI is a subsidiary.

The Star Mart cafés pave the way for Caltex service outlets to transform themselves from regular gasoline stations into pleasant and convenient destinations where customers can stop and get replenished, revived and refreshed.

STAR Mart café's Pineapple and Strawberry Smoothie and Mocha Frappe

‘Promising’ car salesman fails to deliver

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

SOME car salesmen will promise anything to sell a car, then break the promise once the deal is sealed.

Here's the experience of a reader from Alabang (e-mail address c/o jtm1972@hotmail.com) who bought her second Honda, a CRV 2002. Three days after delivery, the salesman was recalling the car supposedly for mandatory rust-proofing. The service charge, according to the salesman, was P5,000. Fortunately, the car owner had the good sense to have the vehicle rust-proofed earlier by another shop and it cost her only P3,500.

Waiting for the car plate, however, was a six-month ordeal. As early as December, the owner had specified a plate number that didn't end in 5 or 6, since plates of the other cars in the household ended in those numbers (this will allow them to have another car to use on days when the other vehicles are banned from the streets in line with Metro Manila's traffic regulations). When the plate was finally available, the series of numbers still ended in 6.

For almost six months, the salesman and the manager of the car dealership refused to answer the buyer's calls. Only when she sought the help of a legal counsel did things move this month, and she finally got her new car plate with the right number.

Slow insurance settlement

Publicist Pete Dacuycuy protests the time-consuming process of filing a car insurance claim. He wrote, "My car figured in an accident recently and had to be repaired at the earliest possible time since it was my only service vehicle. The insurance claim, however, could not be processed immediately simply because it would take the hired messenger four days to pick up the needed documents from my house. I wonder why such a big firm in Ayala, Makati, would hire a foot-dragging messengerial service. It now takes only 24 hours to send documents around the globe by international courier, and this insurance company takes four days from Makati to Alabang to pick up documents!"

Unsafe car parts

Benjie Angeles of Sta. Rosa, Laguna, wouldn't have bought a 12-seater van if he had noticed earlier that its tires were the four-ply type. He said, "A vehicle that size should have eight-ply tires to be road-worthy. I am calling the attention of the Land Transportation Office to the safety and reliability of car tires." He also warned consumers that a full load on a 12-seater van with four-ply tires is a threat to life and limb.

Cable TV woes

We're informing R. de Leon and Prof. E. Tabujara that we have forwarded their complaints to SkyCable for action. Arlene A. and G. Villena of callcent@skycable.com promised to attend to the complaints.

De Leon and his sister complained about the letters sent to them August 2002 and June 11, 2003, by the company's legal counsel. The letters demanded payment covering the months they requested the company to cancel their subscription. He explained that they had the service terminated because they were fed up with delayed bills and the unsatisfactory programs.

De Leon wrote, "We already called up Sky's call center and also faxed my request for service cancellation early last year. Due to the fact that we did not receive a response to our communication, we unilaterally cut off the service connection at our residence and subscribed to another cable TV company. Last June 11, however, we got a letter similar to a previous notice from the law office demanding payment for a service we had rejected and canceled."

Dr. E. Tabujara, retired professor of the University of the Philippines-Diliman, had been paying SkyCable on a yearly basis for many years. When he did not get the bill last April, he called the company but could not get connected. After several futile attempts, he decided to go to the cable company's office and asked for the bill personally. The bill was mailed to him two weeks later. Be that as it may, he went back to the office and paid his bill. One week later, he received the same bill he got two weeks earlier and which he already paid.

"Sorry to say, this is typical of many companies where profit is the primary concern rather than service. Even top officials in the Bureau of Telecommunications are indifferent to the complaints of consumers like me," he commented.

Movie promo

There's a promo at 7-Eleven stores since May 26, perfect timing for school opening and current showing of the film "Hulk." Behind the promo are Marvel (owner of the "Hulk" license worldwide), Mirinda and Philippine Seven Corporation.

Customers are entitled to a free scratch card for every purchase of either a combo meal, a trip pack of Mirinda Strong Fruit Flavors, or 4-can Hulk Monster Pack. The meal consists of jumbo hotdog or budget *siopao* and either a 22-oz. Mirinda Gulp or Slurpee. Prizes include Hulk 3-D tumbler, coloring book, notebook and body bag.

Promo ends July 6. For more information, call Ma. Teresa E. Roxas at 726-7503.

E-mail the author at mgiron@i-manila.com.ph or lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

> The buyer had to seek the help of a legal counsel to get the dealer to act faster and get her the plate

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Coffee, tea and specialty beverage fair at SM Megamall

ON JULY 4-6, Primetrade Asia Inc. is mounting The Coffee, Tea & Specialty Beverage Trade Show at the Megatrade Hall 3, SM Megamall.

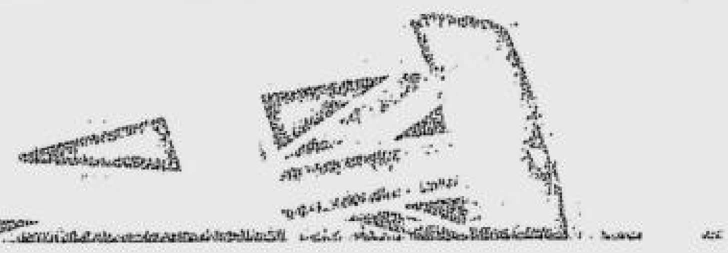
Exhibitors from various coffee and tea houses, companies and franchises in the Philippines, will showcase products like local and imported coffee beans, teas and coffee and tea blends.

Makers and distributors of coffee and tea brewing equipment and accessories will also be on hand to present the latest state-of-the-art machines.

Pastries, biscuits, coffeetable books and other treats that go with the brew will complete the lineup.

The event's highlight will be the grand championship of the Philippine Barista Cup 2003, where the country's most talented baristas show off their skills in making espresso, cappuccino and their very own specialty coffee-based drinks.

Registration for exhibitors is ongoing. Call 896-0682 or 897-0139.



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JUNE

JUNE 21
Italian Cuisine (participation) 9am - 2pm P 2,100
Facciamo La Cucina Italiana! Indulge your palate with the flavors of the Italian dishes!
Join us as you experience the taste of Italy's classic favorites.

JUNE 27 and 28
Intermediate Cooking (Cooking 102) (participation) 8am - 5pm P 3,800
This 2-day, ten hour hands-on course is the continuation of Cooking 101. It will cover a wide array of topics like sauces cookery, different cooking methods, starches cookery and a lot more. This course will let you experience how the professionals do it.

JUNE 28
Japanese Cuisine (participation) 9am - 2pm P 2,100
From tempura to sukiyaki, tonkatsu to katsudon... be an instant Japanese chef and whip up today's most popular Japanese dishes!

French Cuisine (participation) 9am - 2pm P 2,100
Bonjour French food lovers! Learn the classical French food from Coq au Vin to Tart Tatin! In this easy and exciting French cooking class.

Chinese Cuisine (participation) 9am - 2pm P 2,100
Prepare authentic Chinese dishes as only CCA can teach you.

Patisserie 101 (participation) 10am - 3pm P 1,800
Fill your home with the aroma of freshly baked goodies. Prepare pastries that would awaken your entreprenuerial spirits.

Healthy Cooking (participation) 9am - 2pm P 2,100
Delicious and healthy. Learn how to combine the two in this short course on preparing lowfat dishes that are tasty and filling but low in calories.

JULY

JULY 4 and 5
Commercial Breadbaking 101 (participation) 10am - 3pm P 3,800
Learn the ABC's of bread baking on a commercial scale through hands-on instruction. Learn the various dough preparations as well as food costing, food sanitation, and basic bakery management.

Advanced Cooking (Cooking 103) (participation) 8am - 5pm P 3,900
Learn all there is to know about the techniques in cooking in the final course of our cooking series. This will cover topics from sausage cookery to different cuisines like Asian, American, Italian and French. Highly recommended as a refresher course for professionals too!

JULY 5
Salad as Main Course (participation) 9am - 2pm P 2,100
Enjoy a "light" main course of salad with our hearty and filling salad recipes that are great meals by themselves.

JULY 11, 12, 18 and 19
Fundamentals of Professional Baking (participation) 9am - 2pm P 6,000
If you want to gain a solid understanding of the art and science of baking, this course is for you. This course deals with the theories and formulation that equip students with the necessary knowledge to tackle the job of a patissier. Then you will use the knowledge to produce: cakes, pies, pastries and cookies. You will also learn the different cake mixing methods and know how to prepare a butter cream.

Fundamentals of Professional Cooking (participation) 9am - 2pm P 6,100
This much awaited course is back! This 4-day hands-on course will arm you with basic culinary / cooking techniques including knife skills, basic stock and sauce preparation and a lot more.

JULY 11 and 12
Advanced Commercial Bread Baking (participation) 10am - 3pm P 3,900
Inspired by a wide range of traditions and enhanced by a cornucopia of fresh heavenly recipes, this course takes you from special sweet dough, to savory foccacia and flat breads.

JULY 25 and 26
Cooking with Herbs and Spices (participation) 9am - 2pm P 3,900
Add new dimensions to your cooking with the use of a variety of herbs and spices. Learn how they can enhance your cooking and presentation and bring out the best flavor from food.

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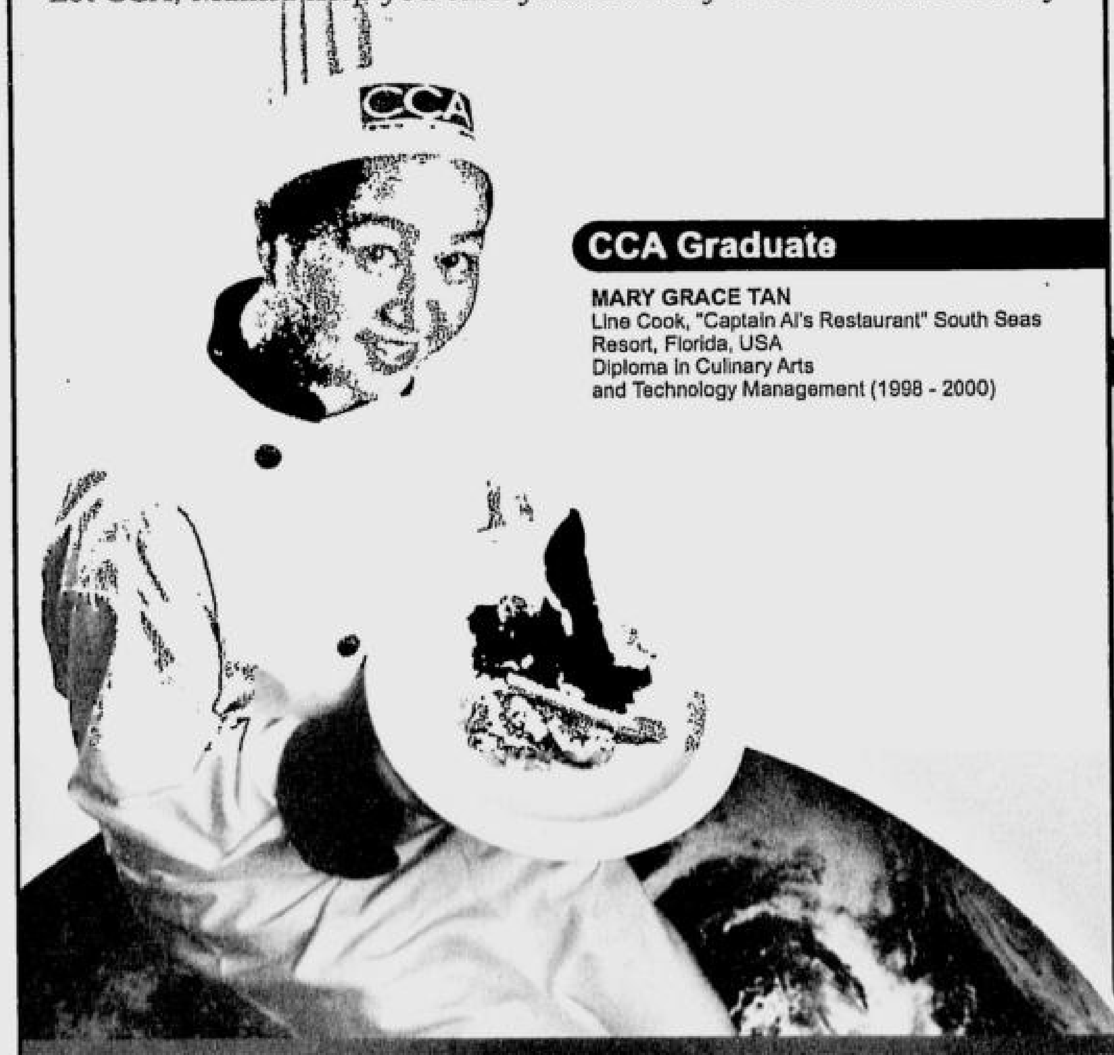


Doreen Fernandez Food Writing Award now open for entries

DOREEN Fernandez

"SAVOR the word, swallow the world," wrote the late Doreen Fernandez, founding deputy vice president of the International Food and Wine Society (IFWS) Manila Ladies Branch, pioneering Philippine food anthropologist and longtime food columnist of the INQUIRER Lifestyle.

The Manila Ladies Branch is now accepting entries for this year's Doreen Gamboa Fernandez Food Writing Award. Everyone is invited to participate except Manila Ladies and their immediate families.

Each entry must be an English-language essay from 4,500-5,000 characters (800 words), typed double-spaced on two pages of short bond paper about "Comfort Food" or food that makes one feel happy, loved, secure.

Use a pen name as byline on the entry. Attach an envelope with an author's information sheet revealing your: (1) name, (2) pen name, (3) residential address and telephone number, (4) business address and telephone number, if employed (5) school name and address and if enrolled in university one's course, (6) e-mail address, (7) cell phone number and (8) fax number.

If you want to be considered for the special Student Category, indicate on the entry after your pen name that you are a student and note if in elementary, secondary or university level.

A contestant is allowed two entries and must use a different pen name on each essay.

Envelopes will be opened only after winners have been selected.

Deadline for submission of entries is no later than 5 p.m., Aug. 22. Entries should be delivered by hand or special delivery in order to receive a receipt of delivery to: Doreen Gamboa Fernandez Food Writing Award, Attn: IWFS MLB Awards Committee at PRISM, 5th floor PDAF Bldg, Sen. G. Puyat Ave. (near corner Edsa), Makati City. Look for Ahyie Torres, tel. 890-9666.

Judges selected by the Manila Ladies will include professional writers. Entries will be judged on: 50 percent, substance of the essay; 30 percent, research—the inclusion and accuracy of data taken from primary or secondary sources (interviews, field work, experimentation, for instance); 20 percent, style—presentation in a readable, interesting and memorable manner using good grammar. The judges' decision is final.

Prizes include gift certificates from bookstores, publishing houses, restaurants; magazine subscriptions; publication of winning entries in newspapers and magazines; invitation to the awarding ceremony in September.

Winning works will be printed in the IWFS MLB booklet on comfort food to be launched in November, and winners will receive a complimentary copy.

Through the award, IWFS MLB seeks to increase the volume of literature about Philippine culinary culture and inspire an understanding and affection for Philippine culinary arts. For more information, contact Manila Ladies Branch president Felice Prudente Sta. Maria at atocha@globenet.com.ph.

New menu highlight: braised pork

DINING OUT

SUPER Bowl of China and Big Buddha restaurants add braised pork to their menus. Savor it with fried rice or other dishes such as Lapu-lapu Fillet with Taosi Sauce, Crispy Noodles with assorted seafood, Crispy Lemon Chicken, Steamed Fish Fillet with Garlic, Chicken in Haw Flakes sauce and Sauteed Fresh Szechuan Scallops. Call 7378888 for delivery service for a minimum purchase of P250.

NORTH Park's Special Toast Noodles

NORTH Park offers Hong Kong, Egg, Whole Wheat, Flat, Shanghai, Canton and Empress noodles that are served in soup or braised style. Indulge in Sweet and Sour Fish and Pork, Yang Chow Fried Rice, North Park Toast Noodles, North Park Special Fried Rice with Sauce and Fresh Prawn Dumpling.

LUAU Bar and Grill offers a fiesta-type meal that includes rice, two courses, soup and drink. Set meals include Tortang Talong with two Pork Barbecue and Rice (P79), Sweet and Sour Pork with Rice (P79), Ampalaya con Carne with Rice (P79), Pork Steak with Buttered Vegetables and Garlic Rice (P79), Lechon Kawali with Pinakbet and Garlic Rice (P89). Call 8956849/ 8975412.

FIGARO Coffee Company presents Mango Creamsicle and Belgian Choco Cloud. Mango Creamsicle is a blend of Nestle's La Cremeria Mangoes N' Cream ice cream, fresh milk and crushed ice. For dessert, there's Belgian Choco Cloud. It's coffee jelly sandwiched between two scoops of Nestle's LA Cremeria Belgian Chocolate ice cream and topped with whipped milk.

COCO CABANA Restaurant and Bar along Kalayaan Avenue, Makati, features Asian-Filipino specialties like Chicken and Pork Adobo sa Gata, Mixed Seafood sa Gata, Laing and Tinomok. It also has seven varieties of Asian-style fried rice and seafood dishes such as Pan-Fried Lemon Butter Salmon, Grilled Squid Teriyaki, Baked Mussels Florentine and Steamed Pla-Pla a la Pobre. Call 8968763 or 0917-7918974.

THE PALMS Country Club at Laguna Heights Drive, Filinvest Corporate City Alabang, will hold its first gourmet dinner on July 12 at The Continental restaurant. The formal affair will consist of a six-course dinner, and will be served with selected fine wines.

MARIO'S presents its Sunday lunch buffet of paella and roast beef and all-you-can-eat Caesar's salad. Call 6343418/3420 (Ortigas) and 3720360/ 4153887 (Quezon City).

CHEF and Brewer Café and Restaurant offers oyster toppings, boneless crispy pata, spicy shrimp pasta and dulong. Call 8938345/47.

TOLDA Grill on Shaw Boulevard (across Starmall) offers its own version of Kinilaw na Pusit and Kinilaw na Tanguigue. The restaurant also serves Crispy Pata, Tuna Belly and Adobo Rice. Call 5357819.

BURGOO offers Grilled Stuffed Pork Chops (two pieces pork chops, stuffed with apple walnuts, seasoned and basted with honey teriyaki sauce) and Fisherman's Platter (combination of baked mussels with garlic, butter, mozzarella and Parmesan cheese, shrimp and Alaskan Pollack, battered with beer mixture) until the first week of July.

T.G.I. FRIDAY'S own spicy sauce gives fresh mussels that lively flavor while a delicious crunch comes with every bite of the Crispy Crablets, which are battered with chicken fingers breading. They're best enjoyed with Jack Daniel's Friday's Manhattan and Ultimate Lynchburg Lemonade.

POPEYES features New Orleans-Style Fried Chicken, Rice, side dishes, Buttermilk Biscuits, Lipton Iced Tea, and Nestle Magnolia Ice Cream cups.

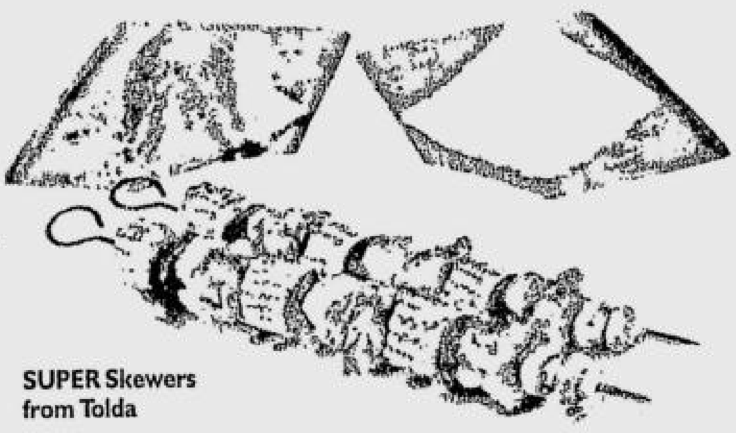
NEW WORLD Renaissance Hotel's Emperor Court serves a la carte treats like Prawns with Assorted Vegetables in Sour and Spicy Soup, Sliced Abalone, Shrimp and Mushroom in Clear Soup, Steamed Shrimps with Japanese Shrimp Roe in Egg White Sauce, Chilled Shrimps Garnished with Sweetened Walnut and Deep Fried Spinach Flavored Shrimp Ball with Sautéed Crystal Shrimps. Call 8116888.

EDSA Shangri-La's Inaho Tei holds the Isaki (grunt fish) Festival until today. Japanese Chef Toshio Sato prepares grunt fish in a variety of ways: sashimi, tempura, grilled with salt or steamed with sake, deep-fried with ponzu sauce, and steamed with vegetables. Call 6347373 or 6338888 local 2738 or 2739.

THE WESTIN Philippine Plaza presents Arabian Nights every Tuesday. It features a variety of mezzes such as Baba Ghanoush, Hummus and Dolmas, Kekabs and Baklava. Salmon dishes are offered on Wednesday evenings; The Longest Buffet in Town, Thursdays; Oysters, Friday; and Moet and Chandon Jazz Brunch, Sundays. Call 5515555 local 1531.

THE PENINSULA Manila presents its MTV Special which includes buffalo mozzarella, parmigiano, tomato sauce, pine nuts, grapes, arugula, fresh tomato, parma ham and (hot) chili sauce as ingredients.

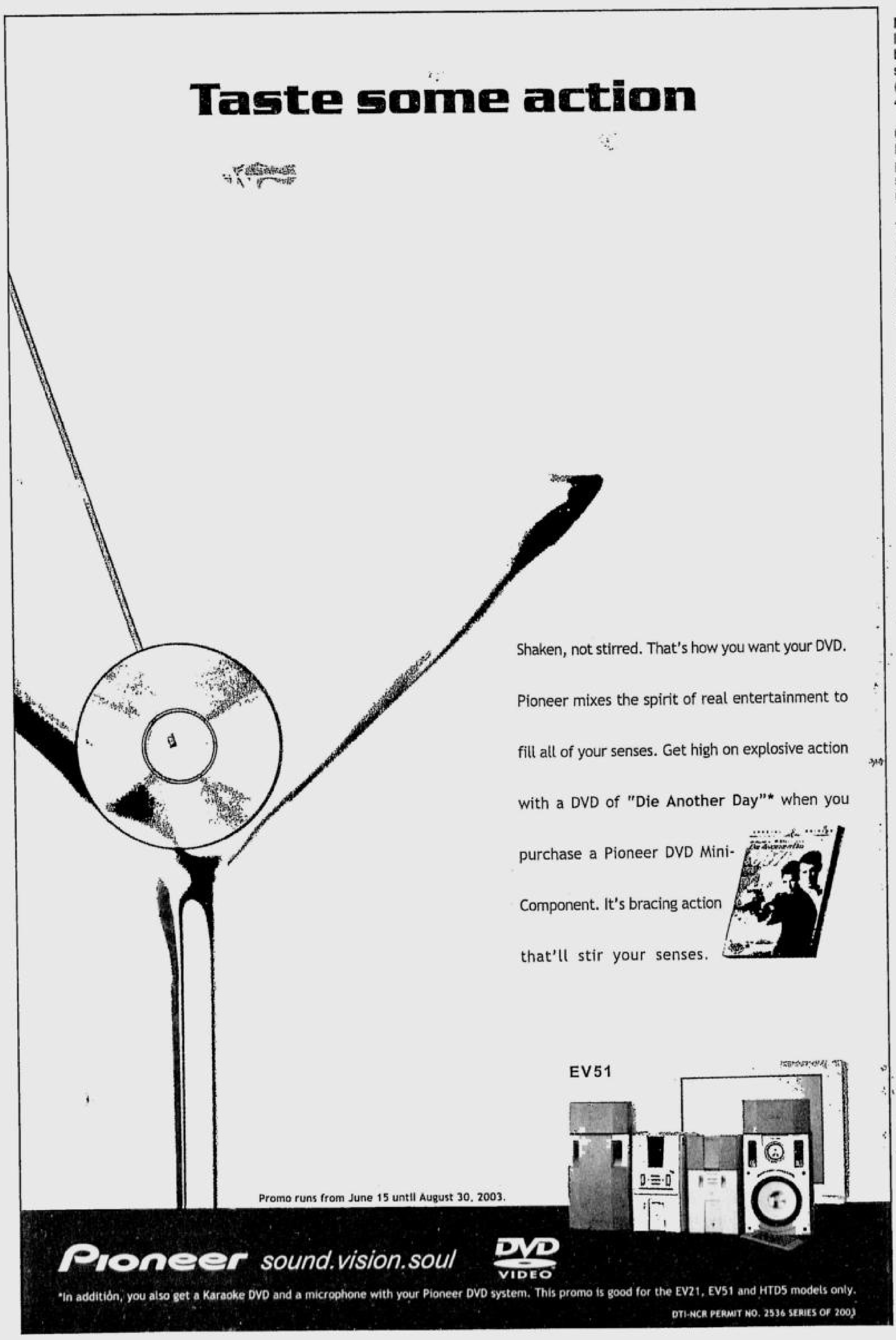
MAKATI Shangri-La's Shang Palace features seafood selections until July 5. Dishes include Beef with Oyster Sauce, Fried Rice and Steamed Chicken, Steamed Seabass, Stir-fried Garoupa, Lobster Cantonese and Shark's fin soup. Call 8400884 or 8138888 locals 7588/7599.



SUPER Skewers from Tolda

BEERKADA Bunch from the Luau Bar and Grill

EACH meaty bite promises a burst of that spicy, zesty pepperoni as Greenwich presents the all new Primo Pepperoni Overload. Loads and loads of pepperoni slices top this new pizza favorite.



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LIFESTYL Tastes

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2) July 5, 2003 - NEW CAKES, PASTRIES AND COOKIES - P3,000. Cooked Carrot Cake, Banana Cake, Peanut Butter, Coconut, Chocolate Chips & Chocolate Nut Cookies, Hopia, Siopao. August 9, 2003
3) Juyl 14, 15, 16, 17, 2003 / 8:30 am - 5pm - ADVANCED GUMPASTE & FOREIGN METHOD CAKE DECORATING - P8,500. New method of gumpaste, flowers, objects, marzipan, quilling, swags & ribbons, ribbon insertion, finest string works, lace pieces, fondant, chocolate fondant. Aug. 11, 12, 13, 14,
4) July 19 - LEARN SUGAR-FREE CAKES AND BREADS - P4,000. Banana Cake, Apple Almond Cake, Chocolate Walnut Cookies, Carrot Cake, All Wheat Bread & Raisin Bread. Aug. 16, 2003
5) July 21,22, 23, 24 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - COLD PORCELAIN FLOWER COURSES WITH RECIPE - P4,000 each. 1) Sampaguita, Sunflower, Waling-Waling 2) Rose, Calleya, Cymbidium 3) Magnolia, Gerbera, Lilies. 4) Open Rose, Hydrangea, Grapes. - (Each set are lessons covered for one day.)
6) July 16, 2003 / 8am - 5pm - NEW METHOD ON FONDANT USING LACE MATS, NEW ROLLING PIN, SWAGS, RIBBONS & QUILTING - P3,000, Next schedule: August 13, 2003
7) July 26, 2003 - DRAGEE & RIBBON MAKING - P3,000. Make your own edible dragees pearl, silver, gold & any color, ribbon of any size using new textured rollers. August 23, 2003
8) July 21, 22, 23, 24, 2003 / 8 am - 5 pm - BASIC COMMERCIAL BAKING - P10,500 (Including Ingredients). 30 recipes of the basic cakes, breads, pies, pastries and cookies. Aug. 18, 19, 20, 21, 2003
9) July 22, 23, 24, 25, 2003 / 8 am - 5 pm COLD PORCELAIN DOLL 4 Day Course - P10,500. Make everlasting dolls using the latest technique in cold porcelain. August 19, 20, 21, 22, 2003
10) July 28, 29, 30, 31 - Aug. 1, 2003 - SPECIAL BAKING - P11,500. Learn to make 30 kinds of special cakes from around the world. Each cake has different icing and decoration. Aug. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29

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Heartwarming response deserves a gift of recipes

KITCHEN RESCUE
Reggie Aspiras

I AM humbled by the show of support readers have given me and Kitchen Rescue since its inception. Your letters have warmed my heart in inconceivable ways. As you have done much to enrich the person that I am and the craft that I so love, I've decided to make this the Kitchen Rescue recipe issue. This time I am sharing some of the best recipes that we've done in my cooking school. I hope that you enjoy eating and preparing the dishes as much as I enjoyed creating them.

Old-fashioned New York Style Cheesecake with Mango and Berry Compote

Crust:
1½ c graham crackers
4 tbsp unsalted butter, melted
Filling:
5 eggs
1½ c sugar
3 packs cream cheese, thawed
3 tbsp flour
zest of 1 orange
zest of 1 lemon
2 tsp vanilla

Crush graham crackers and combine with unsalted butter. Press crust on bottom of soufflé dish. Set aside.

Pre-heat oven at 350°F.

Beat eggs with sugar until very pale in color, about 10 minutes. Add cream cheese. Add 3 tbsp flour, zest of orange, zest of lemon, vanilla. Beat until smooth.

Pour on crust.

Bake for 1 hour. If the top browns before the cake is done, cover with foil and continue to bake for another 15 minutes.

Top with berry and mango compote.

Mango Compote

¼ c butter
1/3 c sugar
juice of 1 orange
zest of 1 orange
2 ripe mangoes, sliced
¼ c orange liqueur

Mix butter, sugar, orange juice and orange zest. Bring to a boil. Turn heat off and add mangoes and orange liqueur.

Berry Compote

1 c sugar
3 tbsp water
1 c frozen blueberries
¼ c mint leaves, julienne

In a saucepan, boil sugar and water. Mix until sugar dissolves and looks like syrup. Keep it boiling for 3-5 minutes. Add frozen blueberries and bring to a boil

HEARTWARMING/ D3

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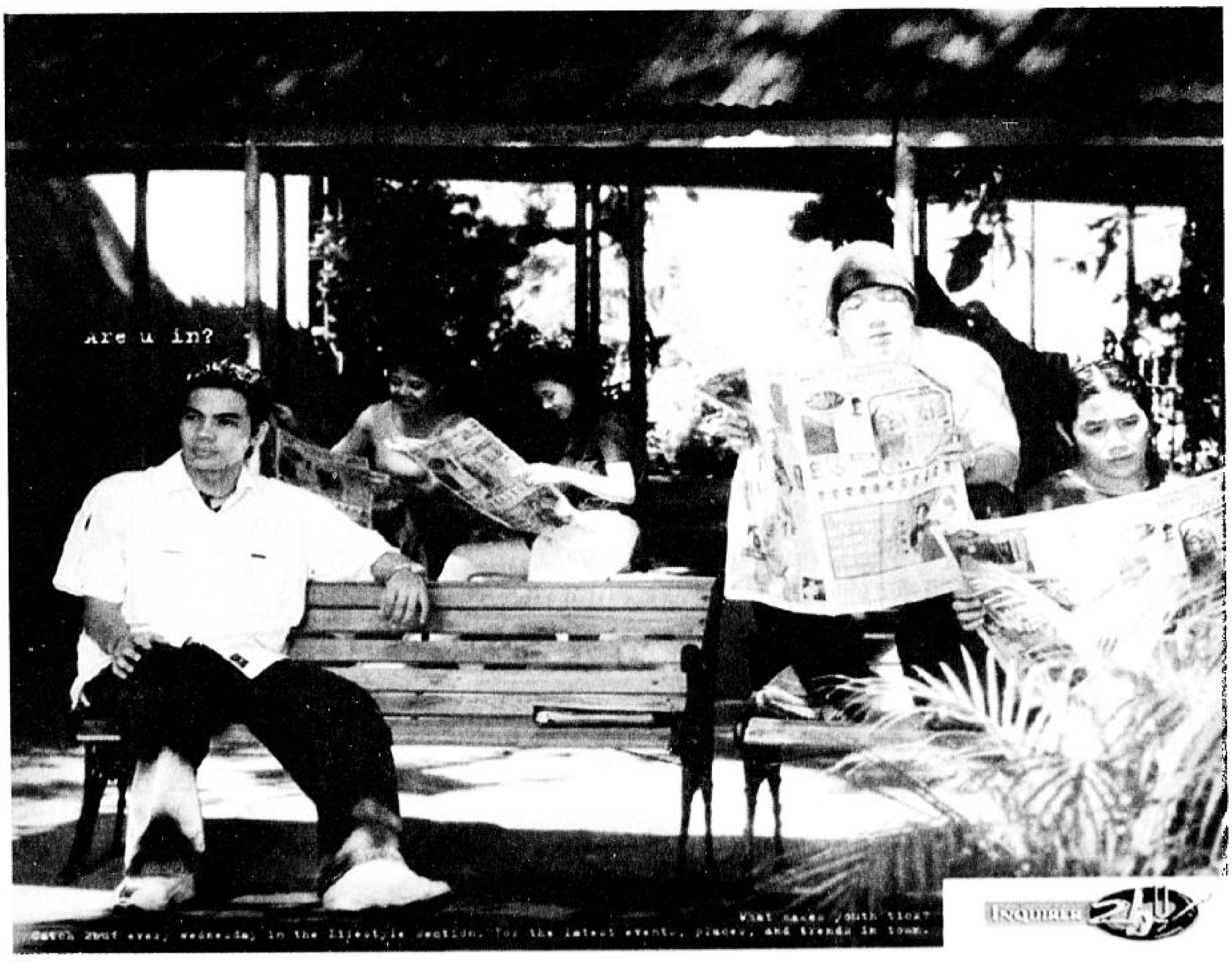
TIA MARIA'S
JUPITER ☎ 890.4735 — FU FLAVA RHYTHM ACE — NO ENTRANCE FEE
REMEDIOS ☎ 522.0429 — TONEWORKS BRIDGES — NO ENTRANCE FEE
TOMAS MORATO ☎ 371.1473 — ENIGMA — NO ENTRANCE FEE
JUNE 26 THURSDAY


are u in?
What makes youth tick?
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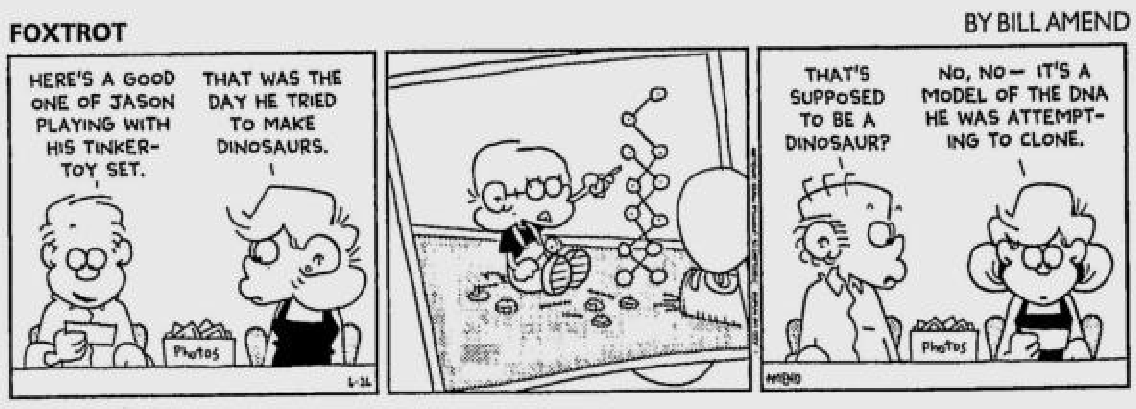
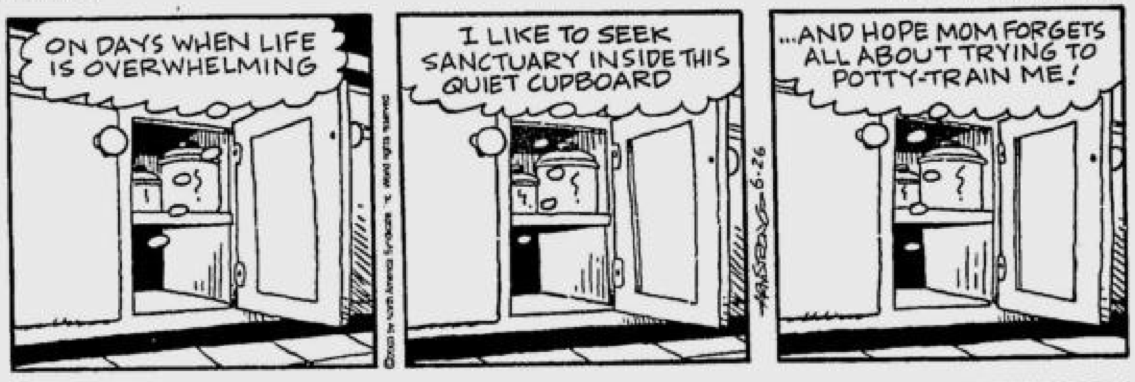
THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 2003

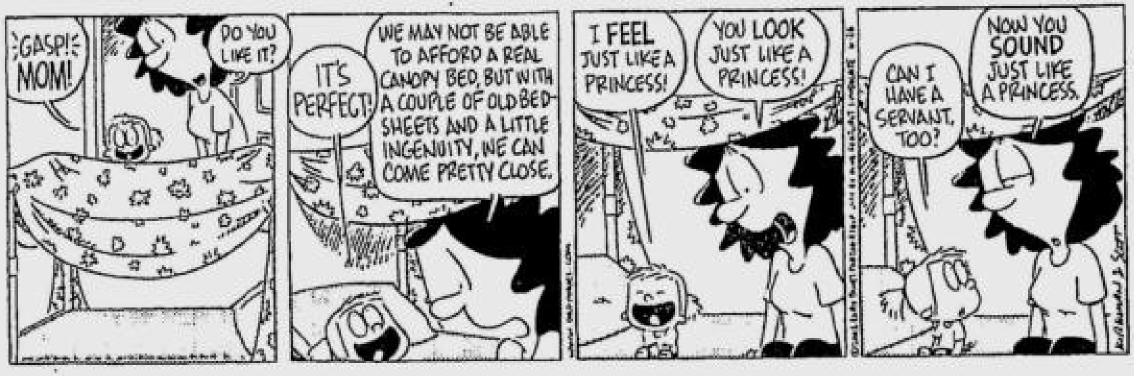
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


HERE'S A GOOD ONE OF JASON PLAYING WITH HIS TINKER-TOY SET.
THAT WAS THE DAY HE TRIED TO MAKE DINOSAURS.
Photos
THAT'S SUPPOSED TO BE A DINOSAUR?
NO, NO— IT'S A MODEL OF THE DNA HE WAS ATTEMPTING TO CLONE.
Photos
6-26
AMEND

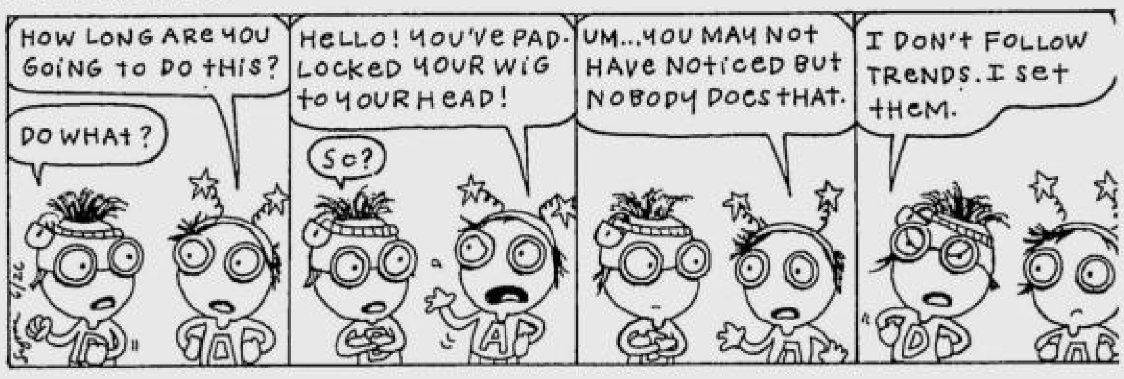
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


ON DAYS WHEN LIFE IS OVERWHELMING
I LIKE TO SEEK SANCTUARY INSIDE THIS QUIET CUPBOARD
...AND HOPE MOM FORGETS ALL ABOUT TRYING TO POTTY-TRAIN ME!
ARMSTRONG 6-26

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


GASP! MOM!
DO YOU LIKE IT?
IT'S PERFECT!
WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO AFFORD A REAL CANOPY BED, BUT WITH A COUPLE OF OLD BEDSHEETS AND A LITTLE INGENUITY, WE CAN COME PRETTY CLOSE.
I FEEL JUST LIKE A PRINCESS!
YOU LOOK JUST LIKE A PRINCESS!
CAN I HAVE A SERVANT, TOO?
NOW YOU SOUND JUST LIKE A PRINCESS.

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO DO THIS?
DO WHAT?
HELLO! YOU'VE PADLOCKED YOUR WIG TO YOUR HEAD!
SO?
UM...YOU MAY NOT HAVE NOTICED BUT NOBODY DOES THAT.
I DON'T FOLLOW TRENDS. I SET THEM.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You approach life with a strong physical vitality and the courage of your own convictions. Others view you as a tower of strength and someone they can rely on. In turn, you feel protective and nurturing to loved ones. You're worldly and are often active in sports. This year promises many exciting beginnings and new paths. **Birthdate of:** Jessie Shambaugh, rural educator/founder of 4-H clubs; Chris Isaak, musician/actor; Chris O'Donnell, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Resist a knee-jerk reaction to disagree with someone today. This could be because you identify too personally with your beliefs. Keep your perspective.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Don't let a friend talk you into buying something impulsively today. Spend your money because you want to, not just to please others.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You feel a bit rebellious today, and you might not even know why. It is your nature to value your freedom. Nevertheless, you have to respect the wishes of others.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Avoid needless disputes about religious, political and philosophical ideas. Learn to pick your fights. Don't get involved in a minor annoyance because you are secretly avoiding a real grievance.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Disagreements with a friend over shared property or joint responsibility for something are possible today. Step back and ask yourself what your long-term objective is. Try to be true to it.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is not the day to disagree with your boss. People are irritable, touchy and not in the mood to cooperate. This means you must play your cards close to your chest.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Don't be discouraged by obstacles at work today. People are not necessarily attacking you; you might just be overly sensitive. On the other hand, co-workers might be a pain.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Do not be anxious to spend money, especially on financial speculation. Give yourself an opportunity to give matters a sober second thought. You will not regret this.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Be tolerant with family members and partners today. Haste and impatience could promote domestic accidents. Take a breath—count to three to promote harmony around you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): A female coworker might require extra diplomacy on your part today. There's no sense in creating enemies when you don't need to. It's no fun, and it's not smart.

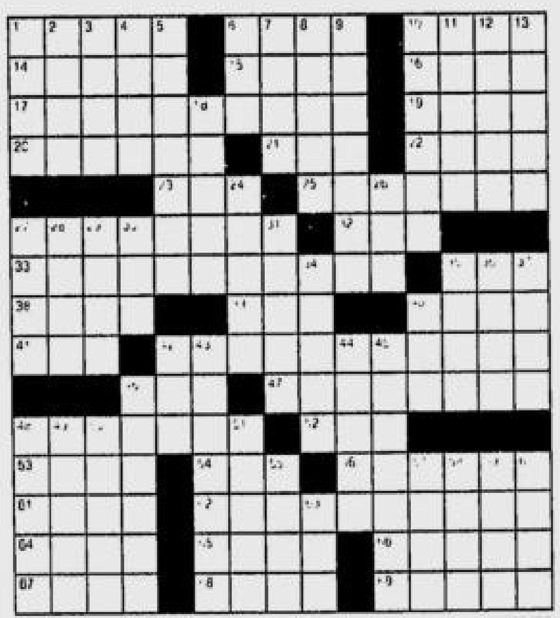
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): It's a poor idea to give in to impulse buying or last-minute financial speculation. You don't have your thinking cap on straight today.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You might be inclined to act too hastily or be overly critical of people today. Remember to judge others as you would hope they would judge you. Life is easier this way.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Fragrant wood
6 Composer Musgrave
10 Incarnation of Vishnu
14 Functional
15 Chamber
16 Idle or Clapton
17 Start of Paul Valery quote
19 Part 2 of quote
20 High regard
21 Part 3 of quote
22 Words of understanding
23 Morse symbol
25 Commandment breakers
27 Mother-of-pearl sources
32 Bounder
33 Part 4 of quote
35 __ humbug!
38 Record for later viewing
39 __ Paulo
40 "Rule Britannia" composer
41 Naval letters
42 Part 5 of quote
46 Sigma follower
47 Altar draperies
48 Engraving
52 Part of RSVP
53 Roy's love
54 Part 6 of quote
56 East Indian sailor
61 Part 7 of quote
62 End of quote
64 Nebraska neighbor
65 Normandy town
66 Macabre
67 Capone's nemesis
68 Tilled
69 Toughen

DOWN
1 Adorable
2 Numerical endings
3 Food fad
4 Der __ (Adenauer)
5 Altar screen
6 Play about Capote
7 King of the road?
8 Colorado Mount
9 USA part
10 Ready a movie for a second viewing
11 Crop up
12 Corner joint
13 Sore spots
18 Man from Muscat
24 "Siddhartha" author
26 __ "King" Cole
27 Westernmost of the Aleutians
28 Predisposition
29 Elec. units
30 Peggy or Pinky
31 Office support
34 Day divisions
35 La __ Tar Pits
36 Blue dye
37 Dame Myra
40 Actor Carney
42 Skater Babilonia
43 Barbarous
44 Sheer fabric
45 Removes cargo
46 Greek letters
48 Astronaut Aldrin
49 Sierra Nevada lake
50 Talons
51 Affected
55 Bulrush
57 Instruction from an editor
58 Apple discard
59 Irish Rose lover
60 Virginia's dance?
63 Instant greenery



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA
6/26/03

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

L	E	G	S	■	P	O	L	E	R	■	S	I	D	E
E	C	R	U	■	E	R	A	S	E	■	H	O	E	D
T	H	E	P	O	W	E	R	S	T	H	A	T	B	E
T	O	W	E	L	■	O	V	E	R	A	G	A	I	N
■	■	■	R	I	P	■	A	S	O	F	■	■	■	■
T	E	E	■	V	A	L	■	■	■	T	A	F	F	Y
O	V	A	■	E	L	A	T	E	S	■	G	A	L	E
W	A	T	E	R	O	V	E	R	T	H	E	D	A	M
E	D	I	T	■	S	A	T	I	R	E	■	E	R	E
R	E	N	A	L	■	■	■	C	A	W	■	O	E	N
■	■	■	■	O	P	E	L	■	P	E	I	■	■	■
A	H	E	A	C	O	D	E	S	■	H	I	C	E	H
M	I	N	D	I	N	G	T	H	E	S	T	O	R	E
A	L	O	F	■	C	A	G	E	Y	■	H	O	L	E
H	E	S	S	■	E	R	O	D	E	■	E	K	E	D

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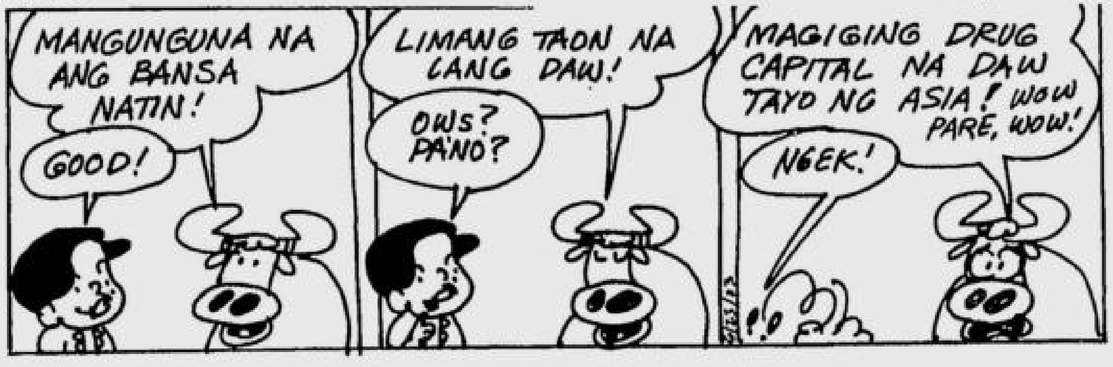
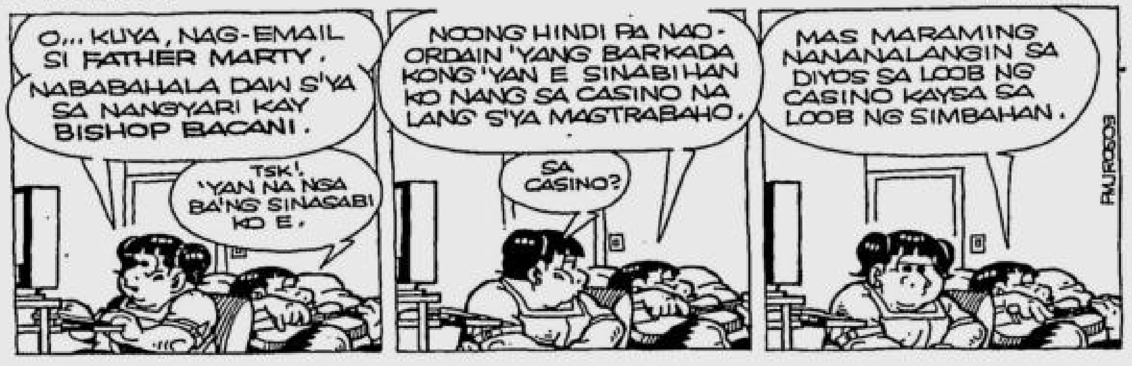
6/26/03

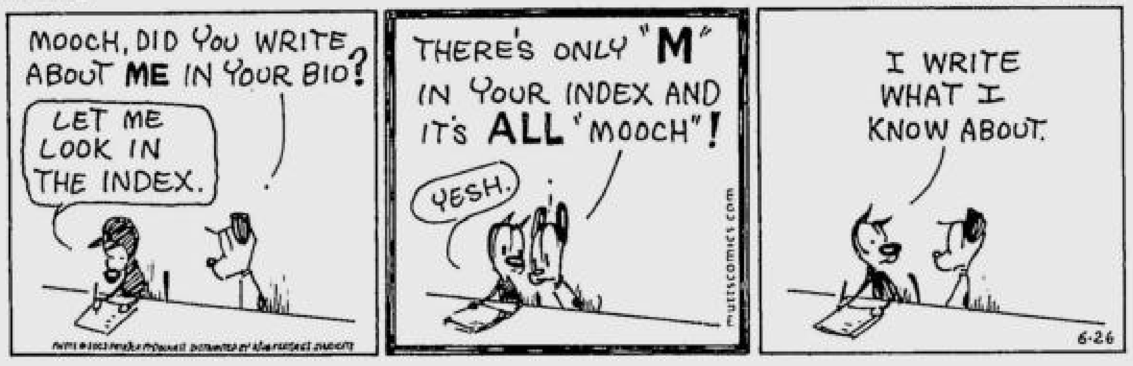
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


MANGUNGUNA NA ANG BANSA NATIN!
GOOD!
LIMANG TAON NA LANG DAW!
OWS? PAÑO?
MAGIGING DRUG CAPITAL NA DAW TAYO NG ASIA! WOW PARE, WOW!
NGEK!

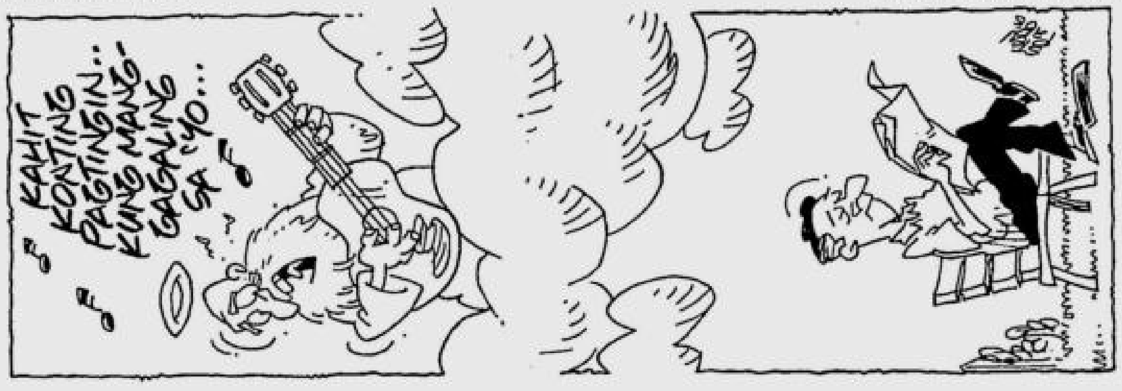
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


O... KUYA, NAG-EMAIL SI FATHER MARTY. NABABAHALA DAW S'YA SA NANGYARI KAY BISHOP BACANI.
TSK! 'YAN NA NGA BA'NG SINASABI KO E.
NOONG HINDI PA NAO-ORDAIN 'YANG BARKADA KONG 'YAN E SINABIHAN KO NANG SA CASINO NA LANG S'YA MAGTRABAHO.
SA CASINO?
MAS MARAMING NANANALANGIN SA DIYOS SA LOOB NG CASINO KAYSA SA LOOB NG SIMBAHAN.
PMJR0603

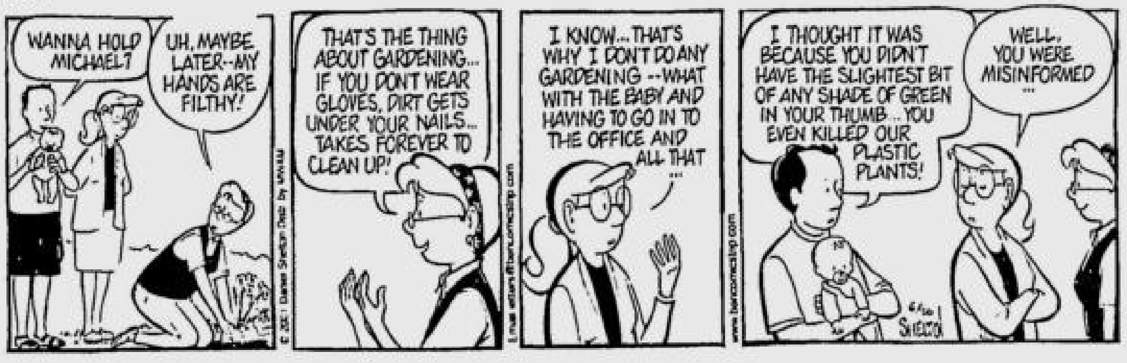
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MOOCH, DID YOU WRITE ABOUT ME IN YOUR BIO?
LET ME LOOK IN THE INDEX.
THERE'S ONLY "M" IN YOUR INDEX AND IT'S ALL "MOOCH"!
YESH.
I WRITE WHAT I KNOW ABOUT.
muttscomics.com
6-26

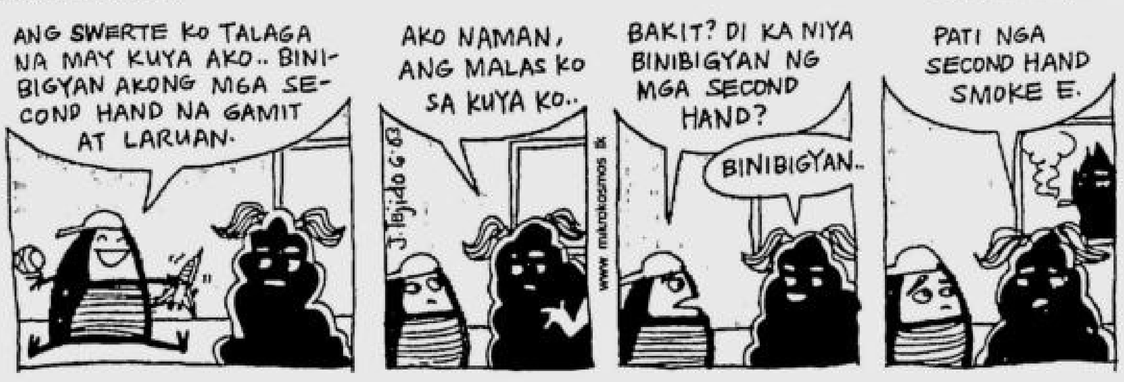
DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


KAHIT KONTING PAGTINGIN.. KUNG MAY GAGALING SA 'YO...

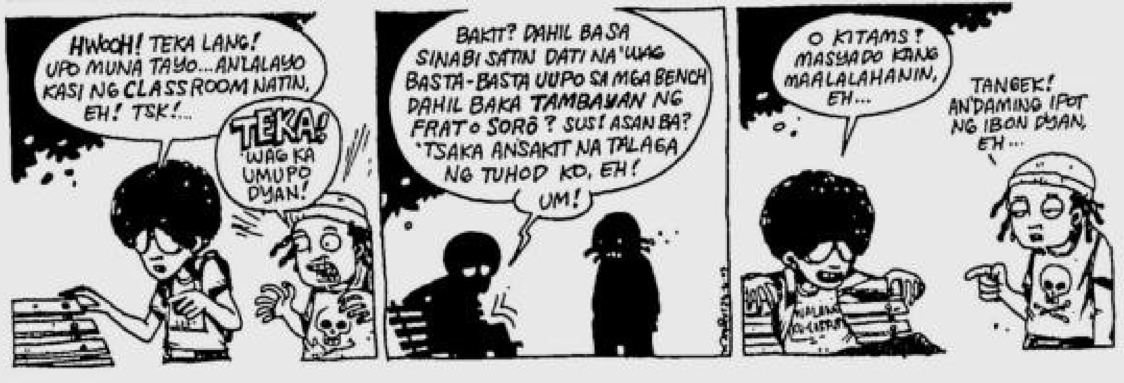
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


WANNA HOLD MICHAEL?
UH, MAYBE LATER--MY HANDS ARE FILTHY!
THAT'S THE THING ABOUT GARDENING... IF YOU DON'T WEAR GLOVES, DIRT GETS UNDER YOUR NAILS... TAKES FOREVER TO CLEAN UP!
I KNOW... THAT'S WHY I DON'T DO ANY GARDENING --WHAT WITH THE BABY AND HAVING TO GO IN TO THE OFFICE AND ALL THAT ...
I THOUGHT IT WAS BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T HAVE THE SLIGHTEST BIT OF ANY SHADE OF GREEN IN YOUR THUMB... YOU EVEN KILLED OUR PLASTIC PLANTS!
WELL, YOU WERE MISINFORMED ...

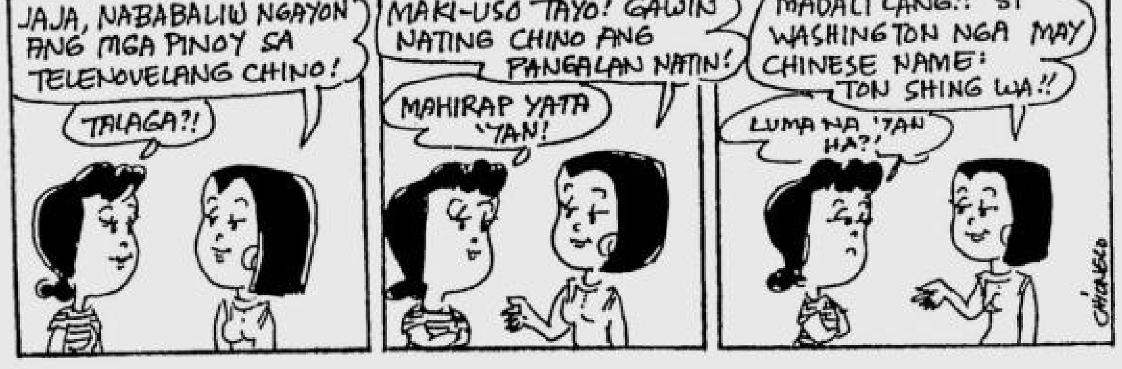
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANG SWERTE KO TALAGA NA MAY KUYA AKO.. BINIBIGYAN AKONG MGA SECOND HAND NA GAMIT AT LARUAN.
AKO NAMAN, ANG MALAS KO SA KUYA KO..
BAKIT? DI KA NIYA BINIBIGYAN NG MGA SECOND HAND?
BINIBIGYAN..
PATI NGA SECOND HAND SMOKE E.
J. Tejido 6-03
www.mikrokosmos.tk

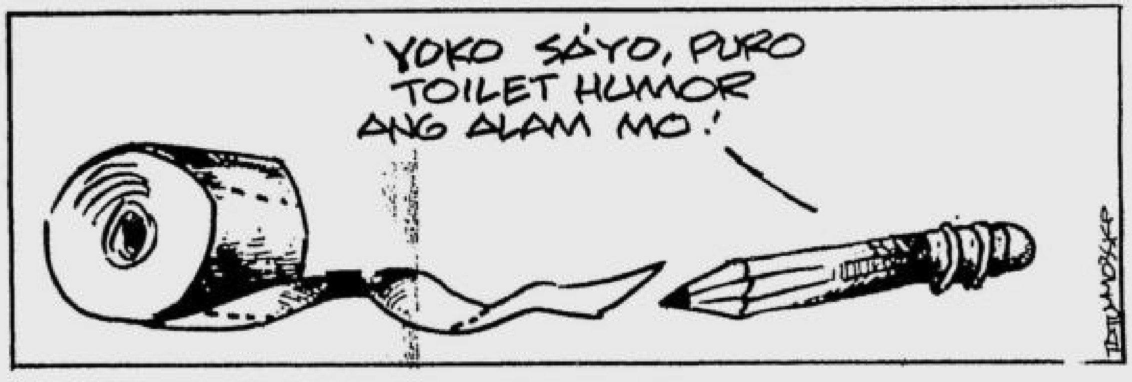
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


HWOOH! TEKA LANG! UPO MUNA TAYO... AN'LALAYO KASI NG CLASSROOM NATIN, EH! TSK!...
TEKA! 'WAG KA UMUPO DYAN!
BAKIT? DAHIL BA SA SINABI SATIN DATI NA 'WAG BASTA-BASTA UUPO SA MGA BENCH DAHIL BAKA TAMBAYAN NG FRAT O SORO? SUS! ASAN BA? 'TSAKA ANSAKIT NA TALAGA NG TUHOD KO, EH!
UM!
O KITAMS! MASYADO KANG MAALALAHANIN, EH...
TANGEK! AN'DAMING IPOT NG IBON DYAN, EH...

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, NABABALIW NGAYON ANG MGA PINOY SA TELENOVELANG CHINO!
TALAGA?!
MAKI-USO TAYO! GAWIN NATING CHINO ANG PANGALAN NATIN!
MAHIRAP YATA 'YAN!
MADALI LANG!! SI WASHINGTON NGA MAY CHINESE NAME: TON SHING WA!!
LUMA NA 'YAN HA?!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


'YOKO SA'YO, PURO TOILET HUMOR ANG ALAM MO.'

Heartwarming response deserves a gift of recipes

From page D1

again until it thickens. You can use strawberries also. Turn off fire. Add shredded mint leaves.

Garnish cheesecake with mango compote on one side and berry compote on the other side. Serve with whipped cream.

Decadent Chocolate Cake

½ c butter
4 oz bittersweet chocolate, grated
½ c cocoa powder
2 tbsp Kahlua
4 egg yolks
2 tbsp sugar
4 egg whites
2 tbsp sugar

Melt butter. When half of butter has melted, add bittersweet chocolate, cocoa and Kahlua. Set aside.

In another pan or wok, beat egg yolks plus sugar until light yellow. Add melted butter mixture.

In another pan or wok, beat egg whites until bubbly, then add sugar until stiff. Add to egg yolks in 3 additions. First two, pour into mixing bowl, third, fold in.

Pour in greased lined 9-inch pan and bake in 350°F oven until done.

Caramel:
½ c brown sugar
¼ c water
¼ c butter
2 tbsp light corn syrup
2 tbsp all-purpose whipping cream

In a heavy saucepan, put the first four ingredients. Boil until it reaches 225°F on your candy thermometer.

Turn off fire and add cream little by little, stirring constantly. After reaching 225°F, add butter. Cool. If it hardens, add little butter or cream.

Ganache:
300 g semisweet chocolate
1/3 c whipping cream

Melt over double-boiler semisweet chocolate and whipping cream. (If you don't have a double boiler, fill saucepan with little water. Bring to a boil. Place bowl over pan. Make sure that the bowl doesn't touch the water).

Frost cake with ganache. Dribble with caramel. Decorate with chocolate and caramel filigree and fresh strawberries.

Chocolate Filigree:

Melt bittersweet chocolate (use compound chocolate). Drizzle to make lace-like designs on parchment paper. Chill until hard.

Sukiyaki

Fat from Kobe steak or rib eye. Use this fat to oil sukiyaki pan.
300 g Angus rib eye, sukiyaki cut

Sukiyaki Sauce:
¼ c Kikkoman
1½ c mirin
1 can Japanese beer
2 c water
3/4 c sugar
banana mushrooms, shiitake, snow mushrooms
1 whole stem leeks, cut into 1½"
oyster mushroom
scored and sliced shiitake
button mushrooms
nappa (Baguio *petchay*), cut into 1½"
bokchoy
spinach
2 large onions, cut in rings
carrots, rounds
Japanese tofu, cubed
sukiyaki noodles or regular *sotanghon*, soaked and drained
itokonyaku, (optional, available in Japanese stores) sliced thinly, blanched and drained
fresh eggs

For the sukiyaki sauce: Combine Kikkoman, mirin, Japanese beer, water and sugar in saucepan. Stir and bring to boil. Simmer 5 minutes more to remove the alcohol taste from beer.

Remove fat from Kobe steak or rib eye and use this fat to oil sukiyaki pan. Add onions, then beef, leeks, carrots. Put sauce in and stir. Add mushrooms, vegetables, tofu. Adjust taste by adding more soy sauce.

Add first the noodles. Arrange vegetables. Add beef and *itokonyaku*. Lastly add fresh eggs. Serve hot.

Paella Valenciana

1 kg clams, boiled, save juice (stock)
2 tbsp olive oil
1 c Tyrolian bacon or any type of smoked bacon
half chicken, cut up
1 chorizo Asturiana or Pamplona, sliced
½ c onions, chopped (or more)
1/3 c garlic, chopped
4 c rice, Vialone brand
3 tbsp tomato paste
pinch saffron (generous pinch)
1 tbsp Spanish paprika
½ c tomato sauce
2 ½ c clam juice
2 c chicken stock
1 c water
1 c white wine
salt and pepper to taste
10-12 pcs *sugpo*, shelled
1 c French beans
yellow and red bell peppers, grilled
cooked mussels
green peas
olive oil

In a *paellera*, put oil, add bacon, chicken, then chorizo. Fry until chicken is browned. Add onions, garlic, tomato paste, saffron, Spanish paprika and tomato sauce. Stir well to distribute seasoning evenly. Put in rice and coat well. Add clam juice, stock, chicken powder. Boil until rice is almost cooked. Season with salt and pepper.

Add clam juice, shrimps, clams, beans, peppers, mussels and green peas. Cover with foil 10-15 minutes. After that add water, stock and wine. Cover with foil and cook more over low heat for about 5 minutes. Uncover and mix. Season with salt and pepper. Top with roasted bell peppers. Cover with foil and bake at 350° for 10-15 minutes.

For those who've requested for my cooking class schedules, the classes for Monday, June 30 were posted last week. Here's what scheduled for July 2:

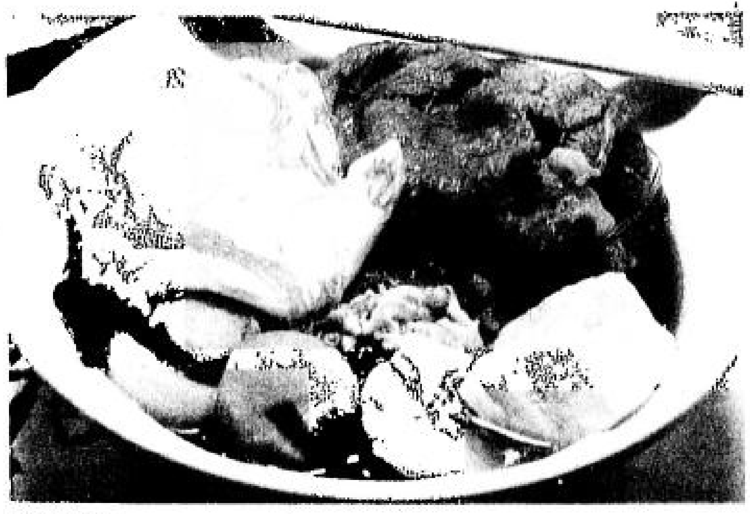
(Morning Class) All New Tea, Jam and Bread—The Best Honey, Raisin, Poppy Seed, Wheat Bread and Dinner Roll Recipes. Jams: Fresh Strawberry, Blueberry, Fig, Banana and Orange. Tea Concoctions—Cinnamon ,Spice, Lemon Spice, Mixed Fruit Tea;

(Afternoon Class) "Bud-bud" Rice Toppings—This class is highly recommended: Aligue Rice with Oyster; Crab and Vegetable Omelette, Crisp Lechon Kawali with Serrano Chili Sauce over Stewed Monggo Rice; Pandan Rice Bagoong with Crisp Hito Ukoy; Buttered Pandan Rice with Pan Grilled Lapu-lapu and Prawns in Uni Sauce; Ube Rice With Grilled Honey Barbecue Chicken.

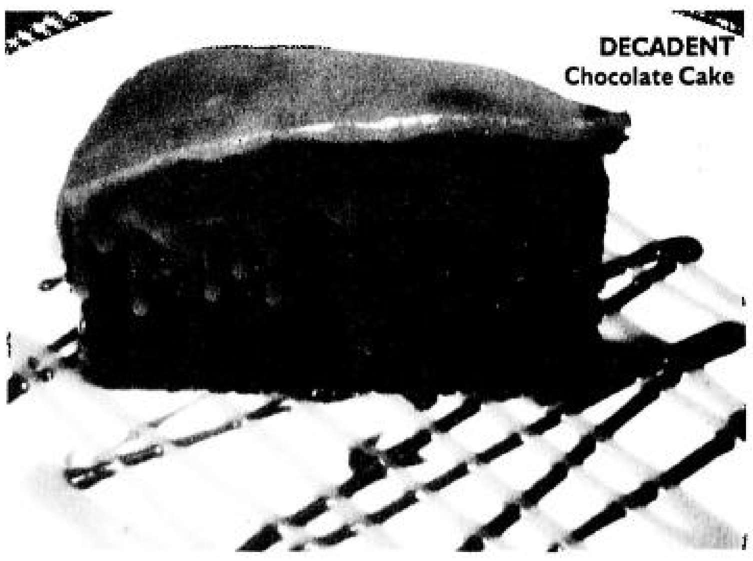
Monday and Friday classes start at 9 a.m.; Wednesdays 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. for the morning class and 1:30-4:30 p.m. for the afternoon class.

Call Cynthia at 928-9296, 927-3008 or 633-5162. The Reggie Aspiras School of Culinary Arts is on the 3/F Bon Appetit, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong.

For questions, comments and suggestions, e-mail the author at reggie1@skyinet.net



SUKIYAKI



DECADENT
Chocolate Cake

Seminar for foodservers

A BASIC Foodservers Training seminar will be conducted by ProActive Center for Training from June 30 to July 4, 2-6 p.m., at Sari-Sari Cafeteria, Fuente Circle, Eastwood City, Libis, Quezon City.

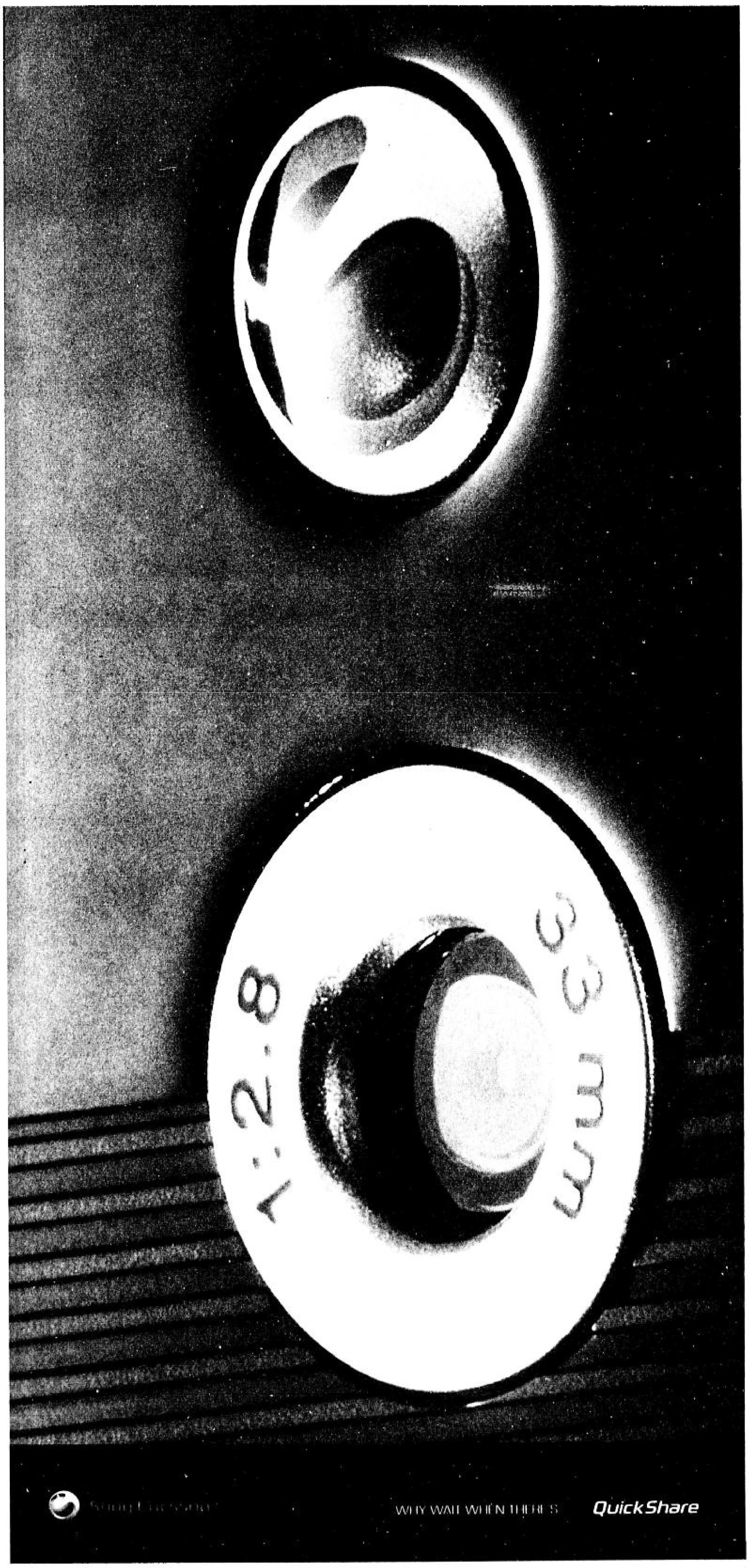
The course is open to those who would like to pursue foodservice careers here or abroad (such as in luxury liners) and those engaged in a foodservice business such as hotels, restaurants, resorts, catering businesses and canteens.

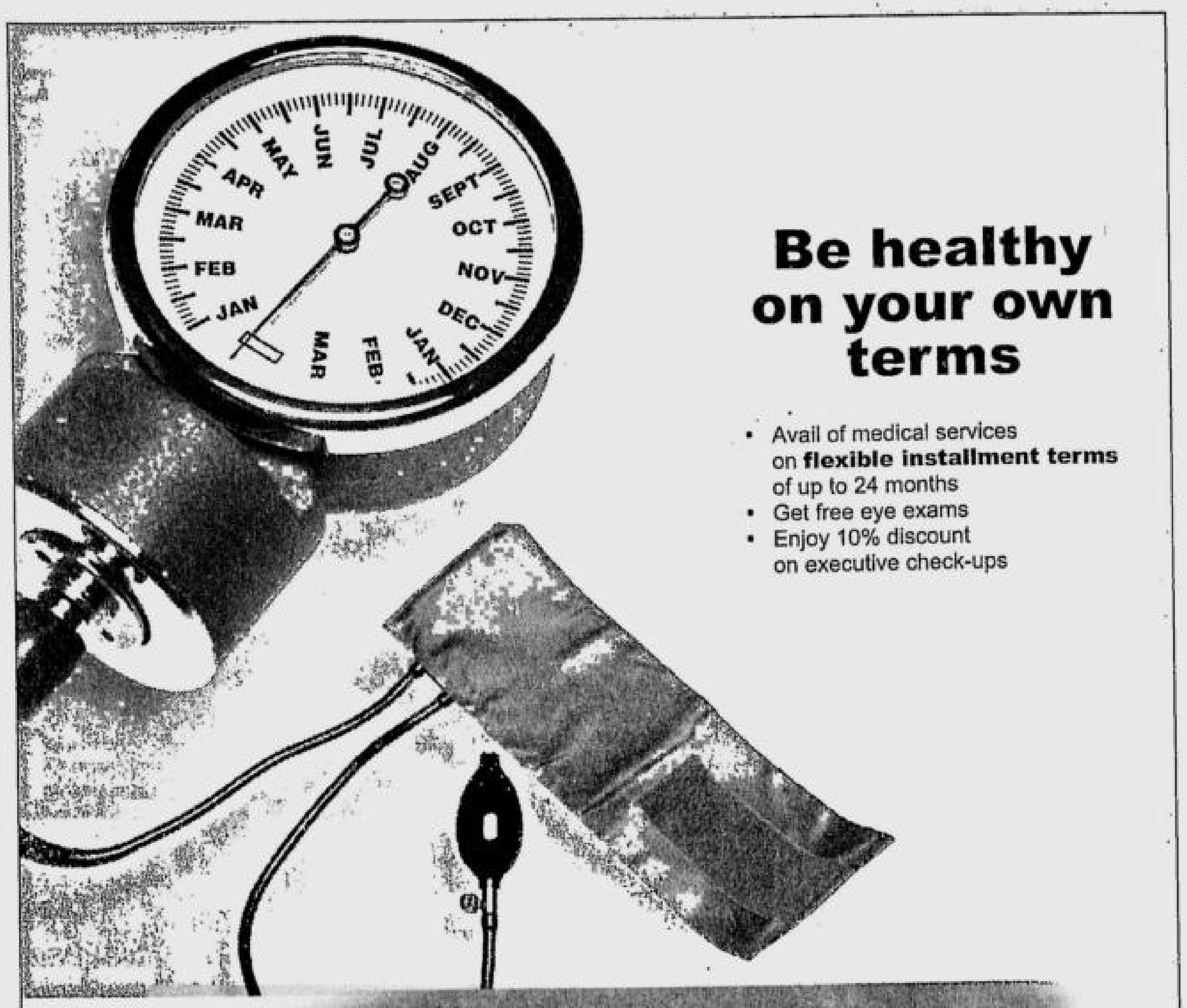
The training will feature hands-on workshops in table setting, service, napkin folding and table skirting. Topics include foodservice behavior, personality and grooming, menu familiarization and merchandising, customer relations and hygiene and sanitation.

The seminar's trainers are foodservice consultants and professors of hotel and restaurant management who are award-winning coaches of the student division of Chefs on Parade.

Registration and inquiries are accepted on a first-come-first-served basis. Only 20 participants will be accommodated. Seminar fee is P2,200 per participant, inclusive of handouts, snacks, certificate of completion, and workshop materials and equipment.

Call 787-6370 or 0916-8226053.





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Wonderful ways with rice

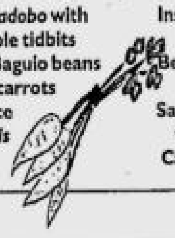
By Dorothy MJ Ferreria
Contributor

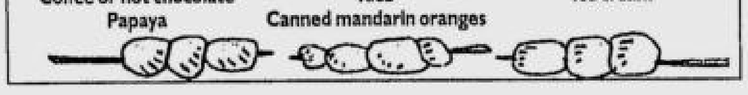
MOST rice recipes are one-dish meals. Examples are fried rice, *paella* and *lugaw*. These are popular because they are filling and affordable.

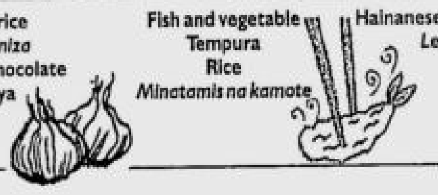
For this week we offer *arroz caldo* with all the trimmings, *arroz ala cubana* and the exotic Hainanese chicken rice. Our *arroz caldo* can be prepared a day before and chilled, ready for re-heating for a hearty breakfast. Arroz ala Cubana is a Filipino dish that is Spanish inspired topped with a fried egg, an option for those who are conscious about their egg intake. And for those who would prefer a light recipe we have the Singaporean chicken rice more commonly known as the Hainanese chicken rice.

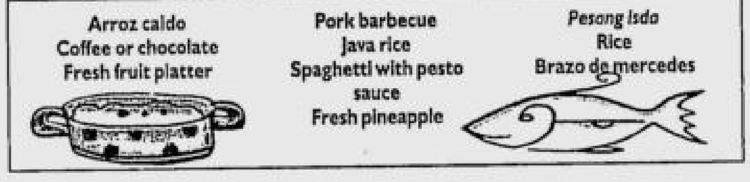
I hope that you will be able to cook these recipes to add variety and excitement to your menu for the week. Happy cooking!

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
MONDAY	Oatmeal with bananas and cinnamon Bread Butter and jam Coffee, hot chocolate or fruit juice	Chicken *adobo* with pineapple tidbits *Gisadong* Baguio beans with carrots Rice *Atis*	Instant cream of corn soup Beef steak with onion rings Sautéed baby *bokchoy* with oyster sauce Canned fruit cocktail
TUESDAY	Bread Sardines Scrambled egg with onions Butter and cheddar cheese Coffee or hot chocolate *Atis*	*Paksiw na tilapia* *Pinakbet* Rice *Minatamis na saba*	Clear soup Spaghetti with meat sauce Garlic bread Cathedral windows gelatin
WEDNESDAY	Garlic rice *Tapa* Coffee or hot chocolate Papaya	Roast chicken Potato salad Rice Canned mandarin oranges	Korean spareribs Rice Ice cream
THURSDAY	Cereal and milk Bread Vienna sausage Soft boiled eggs Butter and cheese Coffee, chocolate or fruit juice	Instant hot and sour soup Fried fish with fresh tomato sauce (*Cardillo/Sarciado*) Rice Fresh fruit platter	*Pancit canton* Fried chicken wings Almond jelly
FRIDAY	Hotcake with butter and maple syrup Bacon Coffee, chocolate or fruit juice	Green mango salad Chicken *adobo* with fried garlic topping Rice *Pichi pichi*	Instant cream of mushroom soup *Arroz ala cubana* Blueberry cheesecake
SATURDAY	Garlic rice *Longganiza* Coffee or chocolate Papaya	Fish and vegetable Tempura Rice *Minatamis na kamote*	Hainanese chicken dinner *Leche flan*
SUNDAY	Arroz caldo Coffee or chocolate Fresh fruit platter	Pork barbecue Java rice Spaghetti with pesto sauce Fresh pineapple	*Pesang Isda* Rice Brazo de mercedes









Arroz Caldo

10 g wood ear mushroom (*tengang daga*)
¼ c corn oil
1 tbsp well pounded garlic
1 tbsp minced ginger
1 c coarsely chopped onions
2 tbsp *kasubha* (native saffron)
6 pcs chicken thighs, cut up
1 c short grain glutinous rice (*malagkit na bilog*)
5 c water
3 tbsp fish sauce (*patis*)
2 ½ tsp rock salt
freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 c chopped spring onions or leeks
Topping:
chopped spring onions
fried garlic or shallots
chopped pork rind cracklings (*chicharon*)
Dipping Sauce:
fish sauce (*patis*) with *calamansi*

Soak the *tengang daga* in water to soften. Wash well and cut into strips. Set aside.

Heat the oil in a stockpot. Add the garlic, the ginger and the onions and sauté until the onions are transparent. Add the *kasubha* and the chicken and continue to sauté until the chicken turns white. Pour in the rice. Mix until blended. Pour in the water and allow to boil. Simmer and stir from time to time until the rice and the chicken are done.

Season with fish sauce, salt and pepper. Add the spring onions and allow to boil one more time. If mixture is too thick add an adequate amount of water to thin it down. Serve hot with the toppings and the dipping sauce served on the side.

Arroz ala Cubana

¼ c olive or corn oil
1 tbsp well pounded garlic
1 c coarsely chopped onions
½ c diced red bell pepper
½ c carrots, diced
½ kg pork tenderloin (*lomo*) diced
1 c raisins
2 tbsp liquid seasoning with *calamansi*
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 tbsp rock salt
1 tbsp cornstarch dispersed in ¼ c water
½ c frozen green peas
cooked long grain rice
fried egg, sunny side up
fried bananas (*saba*)

Heat the oil in a wok. Add the garlic and the onions and sauté until the onions are transparent. Add the bell pepper and the carrots. Sauté briefly to cook the vegetables. Add the pork and continue to sauté until the pork turns white. Add the raisins, the liquid seasoning, the Perrins sauce, the pepper and the salt. Stir from time to time until the pork is done. Add the cornstarch solution and the peas. Continue to stir until the liquid becomes thick.

To serve, place a mound of rice in the center of a soup bowl or hot pot. Top the rice with an adequate amount of meat mixture. Top with a fried egg and garnish with fried bananas.

Hainanese Chicken Rice

4 c water
8 thin slices fresh ginger
½ c rice wine or *mirin* (sweet sake)
1 pc chicken broth cube
2 tsp rock salt
1 small chicken
Dipping Sauce:
¼ c corn oil
½ tsp fine salt
½ tsp white sugar
2 tbsp minced ginger
2 tbsp chopped spring onions
Garnishing:
sprigs of coriander or cilantro
Hainanese Rice:
1 ½ c long grain rice
¼ c corn oil
1 c coarsely chopped onions
3 c chicken broth
4 pcs *pandan* tied into a knot

In a stockpot bring the water to a boil together with the slices of ginger, rice wine, broth cube and salt. Add the chicken and cover. Allow to boil. Simmer for 15 minutes with the cover on. Turn off the heat and leave the cover on for another 15 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a platter and chill for at least half an hour. Cut into bite-size pieces and arrange in a serving platter. Top with desired garnishing. Serve the sauce on the side.

To prepare dipping sauce combine the ingredients with the exception of the corn oil in a mixing bowl. Set aside. Heat the corn oil in a frying pan until smoking point. Turn off the heat and quickly pour the oil over the ginger mixture. The mixture will sizzle.

Wash the rice until the water runs clear. Drain. Strain the chicken stock and measure 3 cups. If inadequate, add water to total 3 cups.

In a large frying pan saute the onions in oil over moderate heat until transparent. Add the rice and saute until glossy. Pour in the stock and the *pandan* leaves. Allow to boil and then transfer to a rice cooker. Test the rice for doneness. If the rice is not yet tender, add ½ cup of water to the mixture and allow to cook for a few minutes more.

Dorothy MJ Ferreria gives cooking, baking and cake decorating lessons at Dorothy's Cooking School in Quezon City. Call 721-7735.